The [illegible]nst Isolation by Theodore Draper

NEW MASSES

NOVEMBER 1937 FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY

Congressman Jerry J. O'Connell on the Challenge of the Special Session

Dorothy Parker on the Siege of Madrid

Election Aftermath

The Results in New York and Detroit

Vito Marcantonio and Arthur Clifford

A Study of H. H. Lewis

A Twentieth-Century, Second-Quarter Poet

William Carlos Williams

The C.C.C. Enters the Labor Market

The "Apprentice" Racket

Don Herman

Albert Halper's "The Chute"

Reviewed by

Granville Hicks

"The Writer in a Changing World"

Reviewed by

Dorothy Brewster

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GRANVILLE HICKS has written for first issue of our monthly supplement (out Dec. 2), an article called "A 'Nation' Divided." It is an examination of the literary policy of *Nation* during recent years. Apply to the *Nation's* literary section standard which that magazine sets itself in general, that of a forum where all voices can be heard, Hicks presents the evidence and poses the question whether the *Nation* is being true to its professed ideals.

Readers of the NEW MASSES who have been casually aware of certain tendencies in the *Nation's* literary section from time to time will find Hicks's article an illuminating confirmation of their suspicions. To those who are inclined to accept the *Nation's* protestations of impartiality at face value, the article in the literary supplement will be a genuine revelation.

We are going to show the article to the editors of the *Nation* before we print it, and invite their comment.

Joshua Kunitz's recent four-article series on the state of affairs in the Soviet Union has made a deep impression. One reader writes: "We owe a debt of gratitude to Joshua Kunitz for bringing to us such a lucid picture of the Soviet Union's vast historic achievement. The facts and figures, illuminated by the fire of imagination, have brought a new and great epoch closer to our understanding. Would it not be a serious shortcoming if this series were not printed in pamphlet form to be distributed by the thousands?" Another writes to Kunitz: "I want to tell you that I think your series of articles has been much better than excellent. I am only sorry they have to end. Please try and write another series which shall similarly directly answer the Denny-Trotskyite school. Also I think it should be a pamphlet." Still another: "After concluding Joshua Kunitz's monumental series on the present state of affairs in the Soviet Union . . . I would like to make the following suggestion, which many of your readers will, I am confident, heartily second. Have the four articles printed together in an attractive pamphlet . . . and perhaps it will become a partial answer to Mike Gold's complaint in the *Daily Worker* about the fact that the NEW MASSES is still not being sufficiently supported by Communist sympathizers and readers of liberal weeklies."

What's What

CONGRESSMAN O'CONNELL, who contributes the leading article to this week's issue, does not confine his anti-fascist activity to journalistic or legislative ventures. He recently returned from an investigating tour of Spain, and he will speak on his findings at the People's Congress Dinner being held by the American League Against War & Fascism at the Hotel Riverside Plaza in New York the evening of Thursday, November 18. At the same affair, the Chinese situation will be discussed by Miss Haru Matsui, Japanese author and lecturer, and Dr. Yao Tsung Wu, of the Y.M.C.A. in China. The dinner is being held to publicize the coming national People's Congress for Peace & Democracy being held in Pittsburgh, Pa., November 26-28. Reservations for the dinner, which costs two dollars per plate, can be made through the

BETWEEN OURSELVES

gue office at 268 Fourth Ave., New k City.

n connection with the same forthcoming congress for peace and democracy, we are in receipt of an appeal from Gordon Sloane, youth director of the League, asking us to relay to our readers a request for places in cars of those driving to the Pittsburgh congress. Mr. Sloane points out that many youth delegates will have extreme difficulty meeting the traveling costs for the trip. Readers planning to drive to Pittsburgh and who will have room in their cars for a delegate or two should communicate with Mr. Sloane at the office of the New York City division of the League, at 112 East 19th Street.

The whole question of the international people's movement against fascist aggression will be taken up in a variety of ways at other affairs. The American Friends of the Chinese People will hold an evening devoted to China's culture at the Brooklyn Academy of Music the evening of Friday, November 26. Lin Yutang, author; Si-lan Chen, dancer; Professor Heng-chih Tao, founder of the people's education movement; and Maxwell Stewart of the *Nation* will be on the program. . . . The faculty of the Neighborhood Music School in New York will give a concert for the benefit of the Chinese people at the school's auditorium, 238 East 105th Street, the evening of Sunday, November 21. . . . Lee Simonson, noted theatrical designer, will preside at a Theatre People's Rally for China which will be held the evening of Monday, November 22, at 11:30 p.m. at the Hudson Theatre in New York. Eyewitness reports of the bombings at Shanghai and Nanking will be given by Miss Pao-chi Chien, and the program will also include addresses by William E. Dodd, Jr., Miss Dorothy McConnell, daughter of Bishop McConnell, and Dr. Ch'ao Ting Chi, editor of *Amerasia*.

Many of the artists who contribute to the NEW MASSES will attend the third annual *Art Front* Ball Thanksgiving Eve at the Savoy Ballroom in New York's Harlem. Proceeds will go to the Artists Union campaign to pass the Federal Arts Bill introduced in Congress last season.

The Labor Research Association and the national office of the International Labor Defense would like to add a few research workers who are in a position to volunteer some of their spare time. Persons who can help with clipping files will be especially appreciated. Those who can help should write Robert W. Dunn, 80 East 11th Street, New York City, or phone him at STuyvesant 9-1042.

Who's Who

JERRY J. O'CONNELL, progressive Democratic congressman from Montana, makes his debut as a NEW MASSES author in this issue with his analysis of issues before the current special session. His colleague, John T. Bernard, Farmer-Laborite from Minnesota, wrote for us an analysis of the last regular term which closed in August. . . . Vito Marcantonio was recently elected president of the International Labor Defense. . . . Arthur C. Clifford is the Detroit regional head of the American Youth Congress. . . . Dorothy Parker, internationally known author, is also an active member of the Screen Writers' Guild. . . . William Carlos Williams is the author of *In the American Grain* and other works. Incidentally, the first issue of the Trotskyist *Partisan Review* announces that he will write in forthcoming issues of that journal, but Dr. Williams writes the NEW MASSES that its editors have no manuscript of his nor will he send them any. . . . Millen Brand wrote *The Outward Room*, one of last season's best-selling novels. . . . Dorothy Brewster is professor of English at Columbia University. She is the editor of *A Book of Modern Short Stories* and has written extensively on fiction. . . . Mark Schorer is the author of a novel called *A House Too Old*. His stories have appeared in *Scribner's, Harper's, Esquire, Story*, and other magazines. . . . Jack Burrows makes his first contribution this week as one of our corps of theater reviewers.

Flashbacks

"I WAS a Communist when I went in to prison, and I am a better one now that I am released from prison," said Tim Buck, Canadian working-class leader to a jubilant crowd which greeted him at the station in 1933 after his release from three years in Kingston Penitentiary. . . . "We need a fascist government in this country to save the nation from the Communists. The only men who have the patriotism to do it are the soldiers," declared Gerald P. McGuire, Wall Street agent who tried to hire Major General Smedley D. Butler to lead a march on Washington. This plot the Quaker military figure made public November 20, 1934. . . . "His songs breathe the class struggle and are fine propaganda," said Gene Debs of Joe Hill, I.W.W. poet. On November 18, 1915, he wired farewell to his friend Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, saying, "I have lived a rebel and I die a rebel." Next day he faced a Utah firing squad carrying out the sentence of a court which found him guilty on framed charges of murder. A defiant command to fire were the slender singer's last words: "Let her go!" . . . By act of the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts on November 23, 1774, the Minute Men were organized, and prior to the outbreak of the American Revolution sixteen thousand had been recruited in Boston alone.

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NEW MASSES
NOVEMBER 23, 1937

Darryl Frederick

The Challenge of the Special Session

A progressive calls upon the people for support as the reactionaries prepare to take Congress by storm

By Representative Jerry J. O'Connell

THIS is written in what is for me a moment of lull between two battles. The scene of the first battle was war-torn Spain, where my colleague John T. Bernard and I saw at first hand how bravely democracy defends itself against the destroying terror of fascism. By the time this is printed I shall be in the thick of the second battle, which will begin in Washington where Congress meets in special session. The first was a battle of bombs and machine guns, of tanks and invading armies against a people in arms. The second will be a bloodless battle of words, and I shall be no innocent bystander, but a fighting private in the ranks.

You may say that it is a literary exaggeration to call two such different engagements "battles." But when I write of the coming battle in Congress I am not just choosing an arresting figure of speech. *I mean battle.* To my mind America is the rear of that international struggle whose frontline trenches are in Spain and in China. What will happen in Congress, like what is happening in Spain, is of grave consequence to the whole world. In Spain and in Congress the fight rages around the same issues: democracy against fascism, progress against reaction, peace against war.

This connection between what I saw in Spain and what I foresee in the coming session is fundamental. If I ever doubted it, I can doubt it no longer. I have been in Spain. The determination that America shall never suffer what Spain suffers today, that we here shall defend our democracy and our peace by legislative and democratic means in order to escape the bitter necessity of defending them by armed force—this is the determination I brought back with me from Spain.

Legislation on the agenda of the special session has already been outlined by the President in his fireside speech of October 12. From this outline I think it is clear that two major issues confront Congress. First, the rule of the people, or the rule of the profiteers? This is the decisive question which will be the real subject of all debate on domestic affairs, no matter how skillfully the debaters seek to disguise it. Second, organized and constructive work for peace, or the make-believe of isolation which cannot and will not save us from war? That is the question of foreign policy we must decide.

These two basic issues also appeared in the last session of Congress. But much has happened in the few months since adjournment. Now the old issues emerge in new form.

THE RECENT BUSINESS RECESSION and the arguments about its cause and cure will color all legislation dealing with our domestic economy. I do not pretend to know exactly how much of this recession is due on the one hand to deliberate sabotage on the part of big business and the stock-market manipulations of professional speculators, or, on the other hand, to curtailed government spending in the face of wide mass unemployment. But I do know that the business recession is real, and that the economic royalists are using it in an attempt to bring about a restoration of their rule.

Those who saved their profits by saddling the people with the cost of the *last* depression, now demand that the people pay for the *next* depression—in advance. Unless their greed is checked they will bring depression upon us before the peak of recovery has been reached. These are the gentlemen who pretend that "fear" of the President and Congress paralyze their business. But are they not now deliberately spreading the poison of fear throughout the land? These are the gentlemen who have opposed every constructive measure of reform on the ground that it would "interfere with recovery." Their opposition has too often succeeded, as the sorry record of the last session shows. Now they point with grisly satisfaction to the new depression they have helped to create, as evidence that "reform didn't work." They predicted that grass would grow in the city streets. Now they are desperately cultivating grass plots in city streets in order to prove themselves true prophets.

Our economic royalists know their political onions. Their refusal to expand production and their blocking of every attempt to increase mass purchasing power helped to produce the present slump. If they can make the people pay for the slump, they will have a golden opportunity which cost them exactly nothing. The slump is their political capital, and they are already turning the screws on the President and Con-

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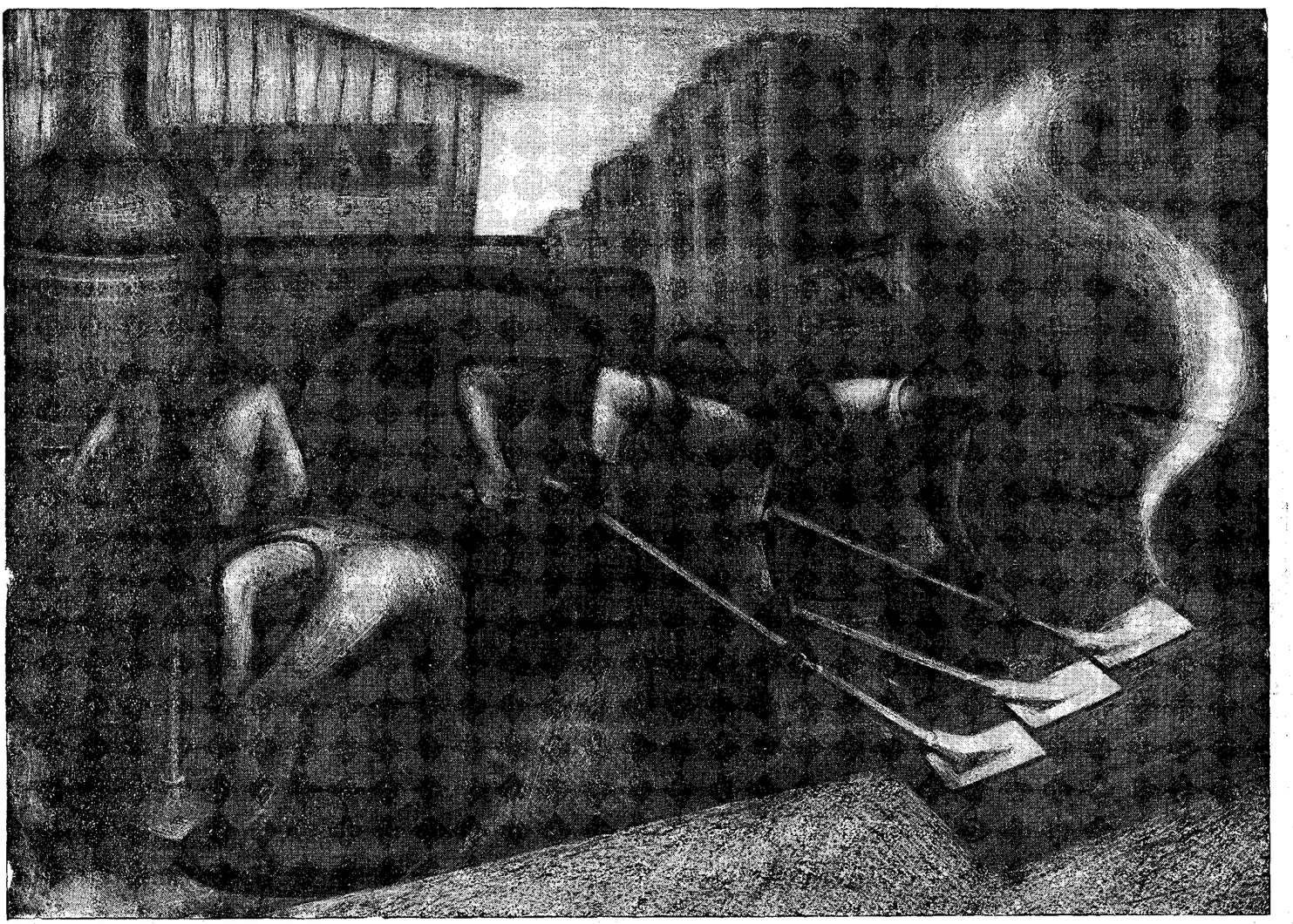
gress. Revise the capital-gains and corporate-surplus taxes. Cut relief. Defeat the wages-and-hours bill. Ditch the farmers. Balance the budget with a pound of flesh cut from the living body of the people. That is their program. And they will use every desperate and despicable means to put that program over.

The President has shown that he is aware of the danger and that he intends *his* program, rather than theirs, to prevail. But it would be a mistake to underestimate the strength and power of this determined minority which flouts both the President and the people. We have just had an unhappy instance of their weight and influence. The speech of the secretary of the treasury, delivered before the Academy of Political Science on November 10, is such an instance. Without advancing any reasons, without even the pretense of logical argument, Secretary Morgenthau simply made the categorical statement that the time for deficit spending is past. His speech has been widely hailed by the reactionaries and the reactionary press, by all the enemies of the administration he ostensibly serves. And no wonder! Here was a complete capitulation to the demands of the profiteers, a complete betrayal of the people. The secretary of the treasury has publicly stated his policy to be one of balancing the budget by cutting public works, C.C.C. camps, relief, farm aid, rural electrification, drought and flood control, soil conservation—in brief, by taking seven hundred million dollars out of the pockets of the poor. He refuses to recommend a cut in our vast armament expenditures. He tells the rich: don't worry—you won't be asked to contribute through taxation.

With this encouragement from the Cabinet coming so opportunely on the eve of the special session, the reactionaries are preparing to take Congress by storm. But we progressives intend to get there first, to attack with vigor, to carry the battle into the enemy's camp. The speech of Secretary Morgenthau gave us warning. That warning must be heeded by all progressive groups outside of Congress. Workers and farmers, middle-class and professional people must give us their full and organized support. Meet the challenge of the money lords with your own counter-challenge. To the demands of the profiteers oppose the demands of the people: wider distribution of wealth through shorter hours and higher wages, through farm aid, through jobs for all who want jobs and adequate relief for all who cannot work. Declare that mass spending-power is the only guarantee of expanding production. Declare that higher taxes for the rich are the only sound way to balance the budget.

The people or the profiteers? That is the domestic issue. Congressmen and senators will have to choose. They will be judged, not by whether they sit on the majority or the minority side of the chambers, not by past records and old labels, not by party affiliation—but by where they stand on the issue.

THE PRESIDENT'S historic speech at Chicago set American foreign policy on a new path. The first practical steps along that path will be taken in the coming session. I was in Spain when I first saw the President's Chicago speech, and wherever I went in Europe I found it hailed with enthusiasm and hope. In the coming session this leadership of the President gives impetus to the struggle against war and international fascism which in the last session could muster only a limited support. Today we who have from the beginning upheld the principle of collective security can look for new allies who will prove the truth of the President's statement that "America actively engages in the search for peace." We welcome these allies. We urge them to help us defeat



Paving

Lithograph by Joe Leboit (Federal Art Project)

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A. Ajay

"They're expecting Mr. Roosevelt any minute now."

the merchants of death. We urge them to help us convince those who sincerely but mistakenly adhere still to the illusions of isolation and "neutrality."

The President has pointed the way. It is the task of Congress to translate his Chicago words into legislative deeds. The Neutrality Act of 1937 must be amended to make its penalties apply only to aggressor nations and to those aggressors within a nation who seek to overthrow by force a government democratically elected by secret ballot. Thus amended, the neutrality act will make embargoes against Japan mandatory, while permitting aid to China. It will apply embargoes against Italy, Germany, Portugal, and the Spanish insurgents, while permitting the lawful and needed shipment of arms and ammunition to republican Spain. It will be the means of "quarantining" the diseases of fascism and war.

The necessity for applying quarantine measures becomes more urgent with every day that passes. Only a few short weeks ago, in Chicago, the President said:

> If these things come to pass in other parts of the world, let no one imagine that America will escape, that it may expect mercy, and that this Western Hemisphere will not be attacked and that it will continue tranquilly to carry on the ethics and arts of civilization.

Hardly had the echo of his words died down when the "ethics and arts of civilization" were mocked by the establishment of a fascist corporative state, next door in Brazil. Fascism has come to our hemisphere, and where fascism comes, war soon follows after. We scarcely needed the jubilation in Rome and in Berlin which greeted the Vargas coup to warn us that the aggressors of Europe look forward to making the "anti-Communist triangle" a quadrilateral, with a fourth side in Brazil. In open defiance of the Monroe Doctrine we are already witnessing a fascist interference in the affairs of the Americas.

The President has rightly said that "The development of peace . . . is dependent on the acceptance by nations of certain fundamental decencies in their relations with each other." We shall best show that we ourselves accept those fundamental decencies by condemning those who do not accept them, and by making our censure felt through economic penalties. This is not a rash move toward war. It is rather the only safe and sure way to peace. For other decent nations stand ready to join us in condemnation of the indecencies of murder. Together with these other peace-loving democracies we shall organize the search for peace.

THESE ARE THE ISSUES which will be decided in the coming session. But they will not be decided in Congress alone. The people themselves will play a decisive part in the deliberations of their representatives. What happens depends in large part on the extent to which progressive people all over the country unite to enforce the popular will.

Unity. This is no longer just a word to me —I saw it as a living force in the gutted cities of Spain. There unity of all anti-fascists has become the most powerful weapon against superior force.

In the United States the unity of the trade unions is the primary condition for achieving the triumph of the people's demands over those of the profiteers. Nothing heartened me so much on my return home as the news of the unity conferences between the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O. These conferences must not fail. The rank and file everywhere can force the leaders of both union groups to find a solution which, while assuring the continued progress of industrial organization, will unite all labor solidly behind every progressive move in Congress and out of it. From this unity of the trade unions will flow broader unity of all the people whose interests turn them against reaction and war.

A. F. of L. against C.I.O., workers against farmers, a disillusioned and wavering middle class, a splitting off of progressive forces from the President's leadership—that is the hope, and the only hope, of fascism in this country. Unity is the only guarantee that that hope will be vain.

Like the trade unions, the masses of the people whose hearts turn toward peace and reject war are unfortunately still divided among themselves. I believe that the sentiment for collective security, for organized peace action, and against isolationism, is growing. I believe that the President's Chicago speech reflects, as it stimulates, that growth. But unity for peace, as well as unity for progress, must be strengthened. Progressives in Congress need help. I know that I speak for others as well as for myself when I call on my fellow Americans to unite for peace and progress. We in Congress will do our utmost. But we need your support. Give us all you've got.

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The Case Against Isolation

In which the author takes issue with the theses of the Peffer-Bliven-Flynn school of foreign policy

By Theodore Draper

IT would be a mistake to argue with the liberal critics of collective security as though they were the advocates of some other type of security. They are not against collective security because they have something better to offer. They are against collective security because they are fully and frankly defeatist, because they have nothing, literally nothing, to offer. This is not to say that they minimize the imminence and horror of war. Indeed, they are overwhelmed by the forces making for war. They see war coming no matter where they turn. They see no point in the struggle against war because the struggle itself leads to nothing but war.

If this be taken as an exaggeration, one of the most vocal and influential of the liberal critics, Mr. Nathaniel Peffer, may be cited. In an article in the current issue of the magazine, *Amerasia,* Mr. Peffer writes:

> Granted all that may be said about the political and social significance of the present war, what can we do either to stop it or to direct its course to an end that will have a less baleful significance? The answer, I submit, is: nothing. And I submit it with profound regret. I want to amend that statement. Let me say instead: nothing except war. We always have that option of course.

Mr. John T. Flynn, in the October issue of *Common Sense,* undertook to answer the question: "What must America be willing to do to keep out of war?" His attack is characteristic of the liberal opponents of collective security. He takes for granted that "the world rides to war in the economic machine it has built to make it happy and rich." Having said so much, he turns his attention solely to the question of how we can avoid a war which has already engulfed others.

And Mr. Bruce Bliven, the editor of the *New Republic* (which has hardly permitted a week to pass these last few months without an editorial against collective action for peace), announced some time ago that "the second world war is here."

ISOLATIONISM and defeatism are dual sides of one coin. It is necessary to emphasize this point because much else rests on it. The defeatist never considers, or if he does, profoundly distrusts, the power of people aroused to action. In fact, he uses his defeatist presuppositions as grounds for not even attempting to organize the masses of people against the evil he so much fears. Why go to all the trouble of setting the masses in motion against war-mongers if nothing can be done? Instead, speculate about all the possible line-ups in the coming war. Brood over the descending storm. And, not the least, ridicule those who insist that war is not inevitable if those who do not want war, who will suffer by war, will unite their forces and strike back.

These people cut the ground from under any effective struggle for peace at the very start. For the aggressors cannot be overcome without the resistance of the ordinary man, worker, storekeeper, doctor, and musician. That is the very heart of any possible struggle. Cut that away by defeatist presuppositions, and you are a long way toward confirming those presuppositions. It is a vicious circle. The liberal enemies of collective security make it more difficult to organize the people for such a program. First they put up obstacles, then they pose as prophets. Actually, they are saboteurs of the very cause they profess to hold dear.

MR. PEFFER is a hard-boiled critic. His this-hurts-me-more-than-it-hurts-you manner is persuasive and doubly dangerous. His sense of self-importance is such that he believes "it is not necessary to talk seriously about collective security, outlawry of war, sanctity of treaties, and cognate ideas and phrases." Indeed, "such ideas," he says, are "too ridiculous even to think about, let alone discuss." Perhaps, then, we had better discuss what Mr. Peffer thinks is eminently sensible, namely, his own position.

He thinks nothing but superior armed force could stop the Japanese militarists. Blockades, he argues, need navies, and navies mean war. Boycotts require unanimity, and that leaves Germany and Italy out. Only war remains as a weapon against Japan. And that is not necessary, come to think of it (Mr. Peffer does so right at the very end) because Japan is going to be so exhausted that "it will walk with humility and heedful of warnings."

Every one of his arguments is obviously questionable. Effective boycotts do not require absolute unanimity, and it does not matter much whether Italy and Germany boycott Japan. What matters much is that the United States, which buys 30-35 percent of Japan's exports, and the British Empire, which buys 24-28 percent of Japan's exports, should stop buying. For the effect of a boycott is felt long before the whole of foreign trade has been ruined.

Nor is the argument against the blockade any better. Blockades are not ends in themselves. They are means to enforce embargoes. Blockade Singapore and the Panama Canal and you blockade Japan, for practically all shipments to Japan must pass through these channels. Even this is not absolutely necessary. Internal action alone would prevent a very substantial portion of the raw cotton, scrap iron, tinplate, oil, and the many other military-economic products which Japan needs to wage war from leaving British and American shores. It happens that these two powers are Japan's main providers. Again, it is hardly necessary to cut off every ton of scrap iron to Japan to cripple or weaken her armament factories.

But the feeblest part of Mr. Peffer's case is his expectation of Japan's "humility" in case of victory. Bitter experience since 1931 has or should have taught us that victory only whets the fascist appetite. Every victory makes it easier for fascism to reach out for more. China conquered would be a bridge to the Soviet Far East; and on this point the Japanese generals are better informed than Mr. Peffer.

MR. PEFFER is a flamboyant defeatist. Mr. Bliven is a discreet one. The difference amounts to this: whereas Mr. Peffer makes no effort to propose any substitute for collective security, Mr. Bliven is completely sold on neutrality and isolationism, the more rigorous the better.

At bottom, there is little difference between the two. Isolationism is retreat resulting from complete disillusionment with the rest of the world. It requires a separation of the world into two spheres: ourselves and everybody else. Everybody else is doomed. We are immune. We are constitutionally different. The forces at work elsewhere do not operate with us. Otherwise the whole fabric of isolationism collapses.

The problem, then, resolves itself to this: can there be a world war without America's involvement? The question itself is paradoxical, but that is how Mr. Bliven has put it, for he has greeted the second world war, but he still thinks that America can remain at peace.

Mr. Flynn answers in the affirmative. He believes, with Mr. Bliven, that the way to keep America out of war is to take the profits out of war. Let there be no trade whatsoever with belligerent powers. Let us now decide to pay for war through taxation rather than borrowing. Let Congress pass a bill to this effect.

Let us grant Mr. Flynn's propositions in order to see where they lead. There is a war in Asia: cut off all trade with China and Japan. There is a war in Spain: cut off all trade with Spain, and then to be honest and realistic, with Germany and Italy too. There

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is a potential war against Czechoslovakia. That will probably cut off the whole Danube basin. If the Soviet Union is attacked, cut off our trade with her. South America is another source of infection; in fact, Brazil is already under control of the Nazis. Brazil will have to be wiped from our trade routes. Indeed, there is no spot on earth where war is not imminent or possible, and the isolationists must face that bravely. And the same policy that goes for trade goes for foreign investments as well.

Now, it was by no accident or whimsy that capitalism turned into expansionist channels, that is to say, to the export of capital and commodities. Even the liberal economists are willing to grant, at this late date, that the expansion of capitalism was an ineluctable necessity rooted in the dynamics of the system. There are only two ways whereby American capitalism can be forced to cut itself off from its foreign markets and its foreign investments. One is to overthrow capitalism and to substitute a system of socialism antagonistic at its very base to imperialism. The other is to turn the clock back to a time when capitalism, in its very early phases, was relatively self-sufficient within narrow quarters.

The first way is out for these liberal critics. In fact, many of them do not accept socialism. If they did, they would have to see that there is only one way to overthrow capitalism—by revolutionary methods, not by neutrality acts. The second way involves a reactionary utopia. It is utopian because it is impossible. It is reactionary because it would take us backward rather than forward in historical development. This is the end-product of the Flynn-Bliven school of foreign policy.

THE *New Republic,* in common with the other critics of collective security, has based a large part of its case on this argument:

> If you are considering economic sanctions, it is clear today that these are ineffective unless you intend to back them with force. And if you plan to do that, your policy is not one of keeping out of war but one involving the very danger of going in.

Again, it is useful to draw full implications. Let us say that Germany attacks Czechoslovakia en route to the U.S.S.R. The Soviet Union, in its own interests, in the interests of its treaty obligations, and in the wider interests of world peace, calls for strong collective action against the aggressor, such as economic sanctions. But this involves the possibility or risk of force. According to those who say that collective security means war, the U.S.S.R. is guilty of a terrible crime: resorting to war. Notice how the whole situation has been turned on its head. We started by saying that Germany had begun a flagrant aggression. We end by denouncing the U.S.S.R. as a war-maker because it seeks to organize measures for its own protection and the protection of humanity.

Transfer this situation to the United States and the result is identical. Collective security means resistance to aggression. The isolationists, by turning their main fire against collective security, completely forget what made such security necessary in the first place. They completely forget that war is an actual or imminent reality before collective security is undertaken, that this policy is meant to cope with a war situation which arose through the efforts of powers to whom collective security is anathema. By thus shifting the issue from struggle against fascist aggressors to struggle against collective security, they give the aggressors a blank check.

The abhorrence of force binds together the isolationists and the pacifists. But Mr. Bliven is no pacifist in respect to Spain. He supports loyalist Spain and he would hardly advise it to surrender. The Far Eastern crisis has brought into existence two Bruce Blivens. The first looks to Spain and supports resistance to the fascist aggressor. The second looks to China, and the slightest measure of resistance, even that of boycotting Japanese products here, causes him to fear and to tremble.

The pacifist dread of force when combined with patent inability to face the main facts of world politics converts a liberal into an isolationist.

The fascists do not fear those who believe that war cannot be checked. They dread only those who would arouse people to action. Some type of force is necessarily involved in every action. The chief error of pacifism consists in placing above everything else the question of whether force is desirable. The real problem is whether action or inaction is desirable, for force can be avoided only at the price of complete passivity. The real choice lies in the ends for which force is to be employed. There is the force of fascism which aims to start war. And there is the force of collective security which aims to deter war.

The main strategy of fascism consists in uniting its own forces while disorganizing its potential opposition. Toward this end, fascism is keenly aware of the obstacle in collective security. Hitler has been wooing Great Britain and neutralizing France precisely in order to render such security impossible. The fascists have been able to register diplomatic successes only when they have succeeded in weakening the collective front of the democratic powers combined with the Soviet Union. To strengthen that front is to erect the only safeguard against the day when isolationist defeatism would bring us to collective disaster.

The "Big Lemon"

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Stuyvesant Van Veen

SILK STOCKINGS ARE BAYONETS!

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NEW MASSES

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Can Brazil Be "Isolated"?

AMONG the arguments against isolationism, one in particular was made especially effective by events of the past week. It is easy to desire isolation; it is another thing to achieve it. We may try to withdraw into our shell with as many neutrality acts as we want. But we cannot legislate fascism away from our very borders. North and south of the United States, would-be Hitlers are now running wild. Their tie-up with the fascist international is clear. The isolationists may detest Vargas in Brazil and Duplessis in Canada but they may disregard them only at their own peril. It takes more than an isolationist to achieve isolation. The others have to be willing to leave you alone.

Vargas's coup in Brazil is not just another coup. A definite effort is now under way in the press to laugh at the whole episode as just an old Latin American custom. Nothing could be less fair to Brazil and more dangerous to ourselves. Vargas was forced to take these desperate measures because he could no longer muster support from any but the fascists. Such is the alignment of forces that he can remain in power only by leaning on the Nazi-dominated "Integralistas."

Just what this means concretely is the subject of two articles to be published in coming issues of the NEW MASSES. The first by R. A. Martinez, "Brazil: The Nazis' Trojan Horse," leads off a new series on the political direction of Latin America. The second, scheduled for the first issue of our new literary supplement in December, is "Literary Fascism in Brazil," by Samuel Putnam.

Red Hunt in Canada

ANOTHER case in point is our northern neighbor, Canada. On orders from Premier Maurice Duplessis, Montreal police raided and padlocked the offices of *Clarté*, a French-Canadian progressive weekly. That same evening, November 9, the home of *Clarté's* editor, Jean Perron, was raided; his personal papers and library were seized; and the entire boarding house in which he lived was padlocked. The paper's printshop was padlocked the next morning, a book shop was raided, and the Montreal bureau of the *Clarion*, a labor paper, was closed.

This orgy of official violence was staged to the accompaniment of pronunciamentos by Premier Duplessis that his campaign to outlaw the Communist Party of Canada had only just begun. The legal pretext for the drive is a "padlock law" passed by the last session of the provincial legislature providing for the padlocking for one year of premises found guilty of "dissemination of Communist propaganda."

This law, like every other of its kind, contains a joker that makes possible a drive to outlaw the entire labor movement under the cover of an anti-Communist hunt. The key term of the law, "Communist," is itself left undefined. Anybody can be labeled "Communist" and then persecuted on that score. The Canadian raids constitute a classic example of this type of fraud. The papers carried away from Perron's home included the *Nation, New Republic, Current History,* and the New York *Times*. The premier warned a protest delegation, headed by Lucien Rodier and Raoul Trepanier, vice-presidents of the Canadian Trades and Labor Congress, that all Communists must be expelled from their organization. To another delegation, he made this threat more explicit by stating that C.I.O. unions were not "bona fide" and would not be permitted to make collective labor agreements with employers. Duplessis considers both the C.I.O. and the closed shop as "Communistic."

It is fashionable in isolationist circles to compare the two hemispheres to the disadvantage of the eastern one. We are dogmatically assured that Europe is not America. But Brazil and Canada are, and they are uncomfortably close.

A Flirtation Grows Hot

LORD HALIFAX'S projected "informal" visit to Hitler has been compared to Lord Haldane's visit to Germany in 1912, but the alleged similarity is largely illusory. British correspondents have drawn the conclusion that Great Britain will offer to bargain with Germany, Germany will again refuse, and Great Britain will again adopt a stronger stand against German ambitions. This line of reasoning sacrifices the concrete circumstances of the present to abstract analogies with the past. Germany's main efforts are now concentrated upon coming to an agreement with Britain in order to obtain a free hand for aggression eastward. The guiding policy of the British tories is complementary: come to terms with the Nazis—at the expense of somebody else.

Mr. Winston Churchill, a tory whose viewpoint on this issue does not coincide with those of his colleagues, was recently quoted to this effect: "Extremes meet. In France they have the united front. Here we have the united behind." This puts the case crudely but clearly. Lord Halifax's visit to Hitler is the high point in the Anglo-Nazi flirtation. It constitutes no ultimatum to Hitler. It is a gesture resembling a handshake rather than the placing of a chip on the British shoulder.

One of the most interesting aspects of the situation is the story about Foreign Secretary Eden's extreme displeasure with the Halifax jaunt. If true, it is not the first time that friction in the British cabinet reached the blazing stage where the factions unloaded their grievances to the newspapers. But there is more than a faint chance that all is not as simple as it seems. Eden has been used more than once as a line of retreat for the prime minister. If anything goes wrong, there is always dear Anthony who would never compromise with the lofty ideals of international justice. Well, hardly ever.

Green and the Company

FOR months it has been apparent that the reactionary attitude of A. F. of L. leaders would force them in the direction of company unionism. Bitter opposition to the C.I.O.'s militant, progressive tactics, together with an open bid for the favor of employers, pointed squarely toward such collaboration with the companies. Now the National Labor Relations Board has ruled that the Consolidated Edison Co.'s contracts with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers must be broken on the ground that the company and its six affiliates had imposed the A. F. of L. union on some thirty thousand employees and had discriminated against the C.I.O.'s United Radio and Electrical Workers.

The N.L.R.B.'s findings and the statements of Floyd L. Carlisle, chairman of the Consolidated Edison Board, leave no doubt that the ruling is correct. Immediately after the N.R.A. came into existence, Consolidated Edison set up "employee representation" plans and continued them until April 1937 when the Supreme Court validated the Wagner Act. During this interval several independent unions were formed, despite

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summary dismissals for union activity. In March 1936, these locals affiliated with the I.B.E.W., and one year later joined the United Radio and Electrical Workers in the C.I.O.

On April 20, 1937, so the N.L.R.B. states, Mr. Carlisle "recognized" the A. F. of L. union. Thereafter the company staged an organizing drive. Officers of the old employee-representation plan devoted all their time to it, were allowed to collect dues on company property and to post signs reading, "Pay A. F. of L. dues here." Carlisle testified that when he recognized the I.B.E.W., he "knew that its organization was incomplete and that the formation of locals and the procurement of membership *was* to follow recognition." Although he regarded unions as an "unnecessary evil" prior to the Wagner Act, Mr. Carlisle very definitely "preferred" to have his workers join the A. F. of L. rather than a C.I.O. union. And to bring this about he even allowed former company-union officers to "utilize the company's expense account."

Needless to say, both William Green and D. W. Tracy, president of the I.B.E.W., lost no time in attacking the decision. They stand shoulder to shoulder with Mr. Carlisle, who is appealing to the courts. According to Tracy, "We are obliged to defend that contract on principle with every ounce of moral and financial strength that we possess, and we shall do so." As for the N.L.R.B., "It leaves all A. F. of L. unions no other course but to go to Congress and demand its abrogation."

Celebrating Moishe Nadir

THE literature of the racial and national minorities in America is unfortunately a closed book to English-speaking Americans. Yet it is a rich contribution to the culture of the melting pot, available if only the right translators and publishers could be found. There are first-class poets and fiction writers among the immigrant millions, writing of America in Japanese, Swedish, Finnish, Armenian, Russian, Hungarian, Spanish, and other old-world tongues. Half of America comes from non-Anglo-Saxon stock, but its full story has not been told, and our literature is incomplete without this.

The Yiddish-speaking Jews, for example, have a complex and powerful body of literature written in this country. It may seem a far cry from Tobacco Road or Back Bay, but is as surely native American, for nowhere else could it have been produced. An intense æsthetic and political ferment goes on constantly in the Yiddish world. The writers are close to the people. Their literature has an intimate folk-quality as pungent and direct as the poems of Robert Burns.

One of the great names in Yiddish literature is that of Moishe Nadir. He is a poet and fantastic Rabelaisian humorist, who invents new words and verse-forms, spins folk-tales, writes people's songs and subtle satires with equal exuberance. Nadir has not yet found an adequate English translator, but among the literature-loving Jewish workers he is a popular hero. On November 20 they will fill Mecca Temple, one of the largest halls in New York, to greet him on the occasion of a new book. Martha Graham, Maurice Schwartz, Luther Adler, Kurt Katch, the Artef Theater, the Freiheit chorus, and other groups and individuals will participate in the celebration. When will the English-speaking workers pour out in thousands to greet a new book of poetry? The NEW MASSES recommends the Moishe Nadir festival as a glorious precedent in American literature.

Do Your Part!

THE voluntary unemployment census is in process throughout the nation as we go to press. Only a few days remain for its completion. As the American Association of Social Workers and the Workers' Alliance have pointed out, the method by which this census is being taken lays it open to all sorts of errors, the most dangerous of which is that it will greatly understate the extent of actual unemployment, and that as a consequence its findings will be used by reactionaries in their drive to cut relief. Mindful of this danger, the Workers' Alliance is actively coöperating to make the census as complete as possible. All readers of the NEW MASSES should do the same. If you are unemployed, don't fail to fill out a registration blank *today*. And check up on all your unemployed friends and acquaintances to see that they do likewise. Registration blanks are being mailed to all families, but many unemployed have no permanent addresses and may not receive blanks. They can be obtained at any post office. Make sure that everyone you know who should register does so—at once!

Justice on Trial

THANKS to the vigorous efforts of a citizens' committee backed by numerous California labor organizations, three victims of one of the vilest frame-ups in labor history are soon to have a new hearing before the State Supreme Court. Last January, Earl King, Ernest Ramsay, and Frank Conner were found guilty of second-degree murder and sentenced to San Quentin after a trial shot through with perjury and suppression of evidence. Under California law, judges may comment upon the evidence, and in this case Judge Ogden doubled for the district attorney in telling a bewildered jury what to believe. The San Francisco *Examiner* made this comment: "He [Judge Ogden] bluntly stated, in effect, that the prosecution had established that the responsibility for the murder of Alberts last March 22 rested on Earl King, Ernest G. Ramsay, Frank J. Conner, and George Wallace."

The first three were active, capable union men, members of the Marine Firemen's,

FACTS ABOUT THE SOVIET UNION—II

PRODUCTION FUNDS IN THE U.S.S.R. IN THE VARIOUS FORMS OF PROPERTY

	1926			1936		
	Industry	*Agriculture*	*Whole Economy*	*Industry*	*Agriculture*	*Whole Economy*
	percent	*percent*	*percent*	*percent*	*percent*	*percent*
1. Socialist Property	97.9	63.6	77.8	99.95	96.3	98.7
(a) State property	96.6	62.6	76.5	97.35	76.0	90.0
(b) Coöperative and collective farm property, *viz.*, property of individual collective farms and coöperative societies	1.3	1.0	1.3	2.6	20.3	8.7
2. Individual property of collective farmers, which excludes exploitation of outside labor and constitutes a subsidiary element of socialist collective farm property	0	0.1	0	0	3.1	1.1
3. Small private property of individual peasants and handicraftsmen, based on individual labor and being main source of his existence	2.0	31.9	19.6	0.05	0.6	0.2
4. Capitalist private property based on exploitation of labor	.1	4.4	2.6	0	0	0
Total percent	100	100	100	100	100	100

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Oilers', Watertenders', and Wipers' Association. Wallace, whose testimony convicted them, has been linked with a previous knife murder. Pacific Coast ship-owners were active in helping the prosecution, even offering to pay for perjured evidence. In spite of this, four prosecution witnesses, the captain of the *S.S. Point Lobos,* on which the murder occurred, the first assistant engineer, and the second and third mates all cleared Conner by giving him a perfect alibi. Another of the D.A.'s witnesses exonerated Ramsay and King; while Frank P. Corrigan, second assistant engineer, identified Wallace as the man he had seen standing alone outside the murder door at the time the crime was committed.

These are only a few of the points that stand out in this case, but they are so flagrant that California citizens who "have never aided in a labor case before" or "been on a picket line" are working together to win some measure of justice for the prisoners.

Mine Genial Host

WITH the bluff heartiness that marks a good inn-keeper, Mr. Lucius Boomer, president of the Waldorf-Astoria, spoke his mind the other day on the labor situation. In an address to the American Hotel Association in Pittsburgh, he reported that the union was trying to win the same salaries for hotel workers as skilled craftsmen. Said he: "This can never be done. The jobs do not and cannot pay wages adequate to support families on the so-called American standard basis and should not be judged on this basis."

The Hotel, Restaurant, & Cafeteria Employees' Organizing Committee is carrying on a campaign to organize hotel workers, including Mr. Boomer's. He has provided them with an issue and a slogan.

The Congressional Battle Begins

CONGRESS now has two proposals before it: the program stated by President Roosevelt in his call for the special session, and Wall Street's program. The original call for the special session urged legislation to regulate minimum wages and maximum hours, to stabilize farm prices, reorganize governmental structure, establish seven regional T.V.A.'s and strengthen the anti-trust laws. Wall Street has another plan. It would write "No" across all socially necessary legislation, and substitute a simple plan for safeguarding the profits of the giant corporations.

Roosevelt's message to Congress represents a retreat from his pledges of the very recent past, in an apparent attempt to conciliate the economic royalists. There was a notable lack of enthusiasm and breadth about the message, which has been widely noted. Except for the anti-trust legislation, the message continued to advocate every proposal in the call for the session. But urging of these reforms was preceded—significantly preceded—by a balm for big business in the recommendation to cut taxes and balance the budget.

If this means that the President has decided to play both ends at once, satisfy both sides on a partial basis, then he is committed to the impossible. It would be the worst blunder of his political career and a real set-back to those progressives who have put their faith in him. The developments of the past two years have witnessed a sharpening of the political alignment in this country into progressive and reactionary fronts, and the President cannot turn the clock back without inviting disaster to his entire program.

A bitterly fought session is indicated. The spokesmen of big business are already in action, and they have mobilized all the forces of propaganda to bring the utmost pressure on Congress. The strategy inside Congress is indicated by House Republican Leader Snell, who talks of the "Roosevelt depression" which follows, according to him, the "depression of 1933." Apparently nothing happened in 1929.

They seem to have their spokesman within the administration as well, for Secretary Morgenthau's address last week is strongly suggestive of a retreat to Hoover—let the profits pile up, and some of it will trickle down to the people.

The treasury chief brought joy to Wall Street when he said, "The basic need today is to foster the full application of the driving force of private capital." He discussed four fields where the government might cut expenses seven hundred million dollars: highway expenditures, other public works, all forms of relief, and the C.C.C., and, finally, agriculture.

The secretary avoided making specific recommendations, but his approach was clearly in line with the demands of finance capital, which has fought every progressive proposal or enactment of the New Deal. With business and industry receding sharply and no "upturn" in sight, it is obvious that further curtailment of government spending will deepen the depression.

Wall Street will not cure the depression. At the very time when business began to falter because higher prices and government retrenchment had cut mass purchasing power, profits were far ahead of 1936. Production was up, crop prospects were excellent, industry had retooled to a very considerable extent. Only one thing was lacking last July to promote a further recovery: adequate incomes for the nation's wage workers, small farmers, and unemployed. Mr. Morgenthau says that relief expenditures "are already being reduced by more than seven hundred and fifty million dollars below last year." He failed to add that retail sales also are now falling below last year.

Roosevelt's tax revision proposals represent an effort to conciliate Wall Street, and they may give the reactionaries a lever with which to upset the entire progressive program. Relief for profits is all Wall Street wants, and once tax revision to help the corporations is out of the way, the pressure will redouble to adjourn Congress and let nature take its course. What that course will be is clearly evident in the proposals for curing the depression by a housing program run by and for private capital. The starting point in this plan is to cut hourly wages in the construction industry "in return for a guaranteed total income over a specified period." In other words, wage-cutting on a national scale, with a stretch-out attachment. That is the kind of solution finance capital offers for this depression and for every other depression: put the workers through the wringer again.

President Roosevelt appears to be becoming acutely aware of the threats of big business. His recent trip through the country revealed nothing that should alter his view of the overwhelming demand for such measures of social protection as a wages-and-hours bill and farm regulation. The only changes that have occurred since, the increase in unemployment, the growth of suffering, have merely emphasized the need for such legislation.

But the decisive factor in this special session will be the amount of articulate support that the people will provide the progressives in Congress. Congressman O'Connell's eloquent appeal in this issue for the help of the whole people should be read and acted upon. He points out not only the immediate issues involved, but the greater ones that are world-wide, of progress against reaction. The special session is an important battlefield in that world struggle.

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The A.L.P. Cannot Rest

Its future leading role in national politics, clearly indicated by the election results, calls for intensive organizational work

By Vito Marcantonio

THE tremendous victory won by Mayor LaGuardia has deeper significance than merely the reëlection of a reform administration.

The alignment of forces clearly indicated the continuance of the political realignment which began in the presidential elections of 1936. The people did not divide along strictly party lines. The reactionaries in New York City sought to fight out, in the municipal campaign, the presidential campaign of 1936 all over again. Thus we saw the reactionaries of both political parties united against LaGuardia. The Hearst press, the New York *Sun,* and other reactionary publications took up the cudgels for Tammany. The reactionary misleaders of labor formed a stooge Trade Union Party to support Tammany candidates. Both the fascist clubs and the Nazi organizations collaborated for Tammany.

A few conservatives supported the Fusion ticket, due to their desire for clean government. On the whole, the same reactionary elements that fought Roosevelt in 1936 were aligned against LaGuardia in 1937.

On the other hand, the same liberal and progressive forces that supported Roosevelt, with a few notable exceptions, supported LaGuardia in this campaign. In fact, a few were added. In this municipal campaign, we found the American Labor Party, organized labor, both the C.I.O. and A. F. of L., the unemployed, and many progressive professional groups behind the mayor. The Communist Party supported the candidates of the American Labor Party. The Socialist Party withdrew its candidate for mayor and gave LaGuardia left-handed support.

Among the exceptions to these progressive forces were Postmaster Farley and Senator Wagner. The appearance of Mr. Farley did no more than conclusively prove that he has become an infected appendix of the New Deal and that an operation is in order. The appearance of Senator Robert Wagner on Tammany's side caused keen disappointment to his progressive friends. No one who knows the senator believed him to be happy in the role he played in the campaign. Wagner's position in the campaign demonstrates that while there are progressives in both of the old parties, these progressives will never become complete masters of their own political souls until they join with us progressives in building a national farmer-labor party. Neither Mr. Farley nor Mr. Wagner did the Tammany side any good. Senator Wagner, like all other liberals who occasionally lend their names against liberal causes, hurt no one but himself.

LaGuardia of New York

The campaign issues raised by Tammany evidenced that the fight was not merely clean government against Tammany. The issues reflected the tremendous nationwide struggle between progressive and reactionary forces. Red-baiting was used to an extreme. Tammany attempted to link LaGuardia with Lenin. An anti-Communist party was set up and the Tammany candidates were placed on its ticket. Leaflets addressed to Catholics and denouncing LaGuardia as a Communist were distributed in front of churches on the Sunday before election. This attack was disavowed the following day by the cardinal's secretary. The Tammany candidates attacked the Workers' Alliance, the C.I.O., and every progressive supporting LaGuardia as "Reds."

Tammany's campaign slogan was "Restore law and order"—the same slogan employed by Mussolini prior to his march on Rome, Hitler before his seizure of power, by the murderers of the steel workers in Chicago on Memorial Day, by the Tom Girdlers, and by every vigilante group in the United States.

Mr. Mahoney promised Wall Street, in one of his speeches, that if elected mayor, he would lead a delegation of businessmen to Washington to demand the repeal of those laws which were injurious to "Wall Street ideals." The last week of the campaign was one of hysterical Red-baiting and labor-baiting on the part of Tammany. It had more than the ear-marks of fascism, it was openly fascist, both in its demagogy and in its attacks on the civil liberties of the workers.

The election of LaGuardia, therefore, was more than a vindication of good government. It was a definite defeat for the reactionaries. It was a definite setback to labor-baiting. It marked the beginning of the decline and fall of Joseph P. Ryan and other misleaders of labor. It was a vote of confidence in a policy of protecting workers when they go on the picket line. It was a ratification of the principle that the municipal government should protect civil liberties. It was a mandate to care adequately for the unemployed. It was a victory for the progressive forces of New York and also a go-forward order to the administration elected.

The highlight of the campaign was the excellent showing made at the polls by the American Labor Party. The American Labor Party vote has made it a vital factor in New York City politics. Its tremendous vote of almost half a million can be used as a springboard from which to launch an effective mass membership campaign and thereby build the American Labor Party into a militant, progressive, political party of wage-earners, white-collar workers, small businessmen, and professional people. It would be a very serious mistake for the American Labor Party to rest on its laurels. Its entire vote cannot be accepted as a strictly American Labor Party vote, for it must be remembered that the name "LaGuardia" was substituted as a voting symbol on November 2 in the minds of the voters in the place and stead of the Democratic star. Consequently, the American Labor Party must build on the basis of election districts, with district captains and district workers for every election district in the City of New York. The assemblymen elected on the American Labor Party slate can constitute a bloc in Albany for progressive legislation.

With its victory at the polls and with an ensuing building-up of the party, the American Labor Party is marching toward a position in the state of New York now held by the Farmer-Labor Party in the state of Minnesota. It will undoubtedly become one of the most important elements in the formation of a national farmer-labor party. The current special session of Congress will witness a bitter intra-party struggle among the Democrats. The Republican Party, during the next session, will by no means restore any of the confidence the people have lost in it. Therefore, progressives throughout the nation, particularly in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Detroit, and New York, must be ready with a political movement of their own in time for the disintegration which will take place within one of the two old parties. The American Labor Party of New York State will undoubtedly play a leading role in the nation's political events in the near future.

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Was Detroit a Defeat?

The strictly labor vote of 154,000 was a body blow to reaction; with mistakes recognized, there is a basis for optimism for 1939

By Arthur Clifford

THE defeat of Patrick O'Brien and the labor slate in Detroit was neither expected nor necessary. There was, and still is, a fairly universal dissatisfaction with the Republican clique that has ruled the city almost uninterruptedly, under a "non-partisan" guise, for more than twenty years. The criminal inactivity of the mayor and City Council in matters of housing, schools, public-utility rates, police brutality, and general public welfare, is an open scandal. The viciousness and arrant stupidity of Police Commissioner Heinrich Pickert, front man of the present administration, are abhorred by virtually everybody. This last fact was so evident that Richard Reading, the successful candidate for mayor, who promised nothing, made a definite point of promising *not* to retain Pickert in office.

ADDED to this is the fact that Detroit is predominantly working class in composition. This was demonstrated in the election itself when, out of 415,000 voters, only 170,000 could qualify to vote on a particular proposal limited to property owners. The labor vote is here, all right. But, unfortunately, a large section of it went to Reading. Why?

I have in my hand a package of matches—one of thousands given away during the campaign. On the front cover are two words: Vote Labor. Across the street is a billboard, rented by the United Automobile Workers' Political Action Committee which conducted the campaign. Half of this billboard is taken up with the same two words: Vote Labor. Crowded together on the other half are the names of the six labor candidates. The whole campaign was conducted around this slogan, "Vote Labor." Nowhere on the ballot, however, did the word "labor" appear.

To be sure, O'Brien was the candidate of labor. Likewise was Richard Reading the candidate of the bankers and manufacturers. But not a single piece of Reading campaign literature carried the words, "Vote Banker."

On the other hand, the actual program of the labor slate was by no means limited to the demands of labor. It was a broad program that could appeal to all of the people, whether or not they chose to identify themselves with labor. The failure to carry this program into the whole campaign was, without doubt, the principal reason for the defeat of labor's candidates.

Not to be overlooked in analyzing the Detroit election was the inexperience of the labor-slate sponsors. They were rank amateurs compared to an old politician like Reading. Up to the eve of the election the "Vote Labor" campaign paper was filling its front page with weighty articles about the provisions of the city charter, while buried inside was a feeble insinuation of Reading's Ku-Klux Klan connections.

The treatment of the Klan issue was a classic example of this inexperience. At first it was studiously avoided, as being "unethical"—an attitude largely dictated by the Justice Black incident. When it became evident in the last days of the campaign that great numbers of Catholics, Jews, and Negroes—ignorant of his Klan affiliation—were planning to vote for Reading, O'Brien was permitted to mention it in a radio speech. But no official literature was distributed to the decisive sections of the population, and it remained for the *Sunday Worker* to come forward with a special Detroit edition to fill the gap. Its fifty thousand copies, however, only scratched the surface.

If the labor-slate sponsors were inexperienced, their opponents were not. They had learned a lot from the presidential election of 1936. The Detroit newspapers, all three of which naturally supported Reading, completely abandoned any pretense of restricting news articles to "facts" and reserving opinions to the editorial page. Oddly enough, the Hearst Detroit *Times* was the least rabid of the three, and this not because of any change in Hearst policy, but simply because it suffered in comparison with the hysteria of the other two.

Yet the newspaper campaign of vilification would have been seriously weakened had the labor slate come forward openly as a people's ticket. To the newspapers the labor slate represented an assault on Detroit's treasured "non-partisan" form of government. Reading, a dyed-in-the-wool Republican, was its defender. This, they repeatedly asserted, was the sole issue of the campaign. (In all fairness it should be said that they did not scruple to mention a few other issues: that if O'Brien were elected, law and order would be destroyed; John L. Lewis would rule Detroit from Washington; factories would desert the city; and children would have to go to school seven hours a day.) Obviously it would have been difficult to prove that a *people's ticket* threatened non-partisan government.

Charles Martin

What the outcome would have been had O'Brien and the five councilmanic candidates run on a people's ticket, rather than a labor slate, no one can definitely say. Certainly the margin of victory for Reading would have been narrower. Quite possibly O'Brien would have won. Without a doubt Maurice Sugar and Richard Frankensteen would have secured places on the City Council. For while it is true that Detroit is a working-class town, by no means do all of its workers identify themselves with labor. Its status only a year ago as the open-shop capital of the nation is the best evidence of this. To these workers a people's ticket would have been infinitely more appealing than a labor slate.

That the Political Action Committee was becoming cognizant of these facts began to be apparent two weeks before the election. The "Vote Labor" slogan was subordinated to a new slogan: "The people—or the economic royalists." Professional people and small businessmen were also invited—ironically enough—to "vote labor."

THIS factor and the tremendous vote rolled up for the whole labor slate are the main basis for optimism in looking forward to the next municipal election two years hence, and the congressional elections of 1938 and 1940. It is, after all, no mean achievement to poll 154,000 votes out of a total of 415,000 for a strictly labor candidate. And this, despite the treachery of Frank X. Martel, who miscounted the votes of the Detroit and Wayne County Federation of Labor, in order to put that body officially on record behind Reading.

When it is considered that three of the labor candidates for Council—Doll, Thomas, and Reuther—were completely new to politics, virtually unknown to the electorate, the vote they collected of better than 120,000 each is little short of miraculous. Such an achievement is utterly unprecedented in the history of Detroit or, for that matter, of any other city.

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C.C.C. Enters the Labor Market

What happens to wage levels when youths from the camps come to town to "learn a trade" at nothing a week

By Don Herman

THE education given our boys in the C.C.C. camps has taken a new trend toward the practical. It recalls that when Congress in its last session extended the C.C.C. for another three years, the turning over of a new leaf was expected. Is this recent trend the newly turned leaf?

A page from the experience of one of the New England educational advisers tells what is happening. This account was printed in *Happy Days,* the paper that circulates through all the camps:

> The problem of "job training," often a confusing issue in the program of C.C.C. camp education, has been met in successful tho novel fashion by Louis M. Zimmerman, Educational Adviser at Company 1171, North Adams, Mass.
>
> In considering the problem, he visualized a practical solution which rested in large measure on the coöperation established with business concerns in the local community. After outlining a definite, practical plan, Director Zimmerman broached the plan to several of the businessmen of North Adams. Convinced of its soundness and intrinsic worth, they gave their hearty and enthusiastic support.
>
> It is a progressive plan, one that demands confidence on the part of the businessman and enthusiastic, spirited interest on the part of the enrollee. A selected group of enrollees volunteered their services on Saturday of each week to the employers who were coöperating. . . . The employer received the free services of the enrollee, but gave in return specific, practical training in the business which he was operating.
>
> Two enrollees were observed as they went about their work in a large and efficient service station. Courteously and cheerfully the boys greeted the customers, serviced their cars, and in general displayed the sound business practices and techniques which are demanded of the gas station attendant. The employer stated: "When a boy has enough interest in a job to work a long day for nothing, then I am going to make sure he learns something over and above what he picks up thru experience." No question there about the success of the plan!
>
> In a large garage an enrollee was found industriously tightening the head on the motor of a large truck. He had just finished replacing a gasket, and the expression on his face was ample proof of the satisfaction and confidence he was gaining. . . . In four weeks he had advanced to the point where the manager permitted him to perform specific commercial jobs. . . .

The newspaper *Happy Days* headlined the above article as "Training Plan That Works," apparently without first bothering to inquire what becomes of the regular gas-station attendants and garage mechanics when the C.C.C. boys come to town.

That question was answered in a startling manner by one of the C.C.C. officials in Washington. The official announced that the plan was not so "novel" as *Happy Days* claimed, that it has been widely used and has, moreover, been found subject to easy abuse. He told guardedly of an incident occurring recently in Iowa. Each Saturday a truckload of boys went into town from their C.C.C. encampment, to work at a large service station. They were ostensibly learning the trade. After several months one of the boys complained to his camp officer that he thought he and his buddies were being "used" by the coöperative businessman. An investigation was made. It brought out the fact that each Saturday this employer cut his rates for washing cars, outfitted the non-wage C.C.C. boys with hose and sponges, and proceeded to clean up. But his prosperity was gained at the expense of the town's regular workers employed at that job: each Saturday he had dismissed part of his own staff, and his competitors were forced to follow suit because of their slackened trade. The consequence for that Iowa town was a disrupted labor situation and a decrease in the purchasing power of part of the consuming public—which struck back directly at the "coöperative" businessman.

Strangely enough, the national administration of C.C.C. remains undaunted by such experiences. The same official who told the yarn about the Iowa town regarded it as merely a yarn! Although he admitted that it is well-nigh impossible to prevent abuses when an army of young men are lent to private industry, still he could not repress his conviction that a "practical apprenticeship" was the only desirable education for the 271,000 young men enrolled with the Civilian Conservation Corps. "If I get my way," he said, "we will go to organizations like General Electric and say, 'Now a couple of our camps in the neighborhood of your factory will be turned over to you. You can train the boys to fill positions in your factory.' "

A. Solomon

He went on to enumerate the practical jobs which C.C.C. boys perform on their Saturday excursions. Some act as farm laborers, helping to harvest crops. Others operate an abandoned furniture factory, or serve in a machine repair shop. Still others put in time at a large printing plant. Many of these "apprentice" activities take very little skill, yet the men serve Saturday after Saturday, "learning" how to work without pay.

Each month 25,000 young men go forth from the C.C.C. camps to seek jobs. They have been equipped by the C.C.C. with a small knack but no ethics. For inspirational talks at the camp forums emphasize that each man stands alone in his struggle to get and keep a job, no holds barred.

When recently the C.C.C. had an opportunity to include instruction in the social sciences, showing the men where they fit into the economic picture, the chance was as usual cold-shouldered. The opportunity offered itself in the choice of a uniform reference library to be placed in each of the 1854 C.C.C. camps. Officials in the U. S. Office of Education who are in partial charge of C.C.C. training have just selected the two hundred books for the library. Of these volumes, only one deals directly with a social problem. Even that was included for its statistical value. The book is Stuart Chase's *Rich Land, Poor Land.* Other volumes in the collection are highly specialized treatments of engineering problems, geology, mechanics, techniques in applying for work, how to dance, how to meet individual moral issues.

The usual excuse given for this emphasis on the "practical" in their studies is that the average C.C.C. enrollee stays only eight months with the Civilian Conservation Corps, and that the time is too short for any education other than one in this practical individualism. That the average enrollee will never continue his education beyond his C.C.C. days, and that what he learns of social realities must come now or never, is a matter uninvestigated.

This situation, whereby C.C.C. neglects an important education service, has taken on the proportions of a farce in late days. The C.C.C. administration in Washington puts out publicity material which smooths over the lack by parading an old promise. A press release dated September 29, 1937, surveys the accomplishments of the educational program and recalls with a touch of pride one of the original aims:

> To develop as far as practicable an understanding of the prevailing social and economic conditions to the end that each man may coöperate intelligently in improving these conditions.

With that press memorandum on their desks, directors of the C.C.C. in Washington continue to prepare textbooks on auto mechanics and the heat treatment of steel so that the C.C.C. boys will not abuse the machinery used on their projects. It is unfortunate that the same education which protects the machinery from the young men does not protect the young men from the machinery.

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Incredible, Fantastic . . . and True

An American writer reports on the siege of Madrid, and how life goes on for the million who remain

By Dorothy Parker

I WANT to say first that I came to Spain without my ax to grind. I didn't bring messages from anybody, nor greetings to anybody. I am not a member of any political party. The only group I have ever been affiliated with is that not especially brave little band that hid its nakedness of heart and mind under the out-of-date garment of a sense of humor. I heard someone say, and so I said it too, that ridicule is the most effective weapon. I don't suppose I ever really believed it, but it was easy and comforting, and so I said it. Well, now I know. I know that there are things that never have been funny, and never will be. And I know that ridicule may be a shield, but it is not a weapon.

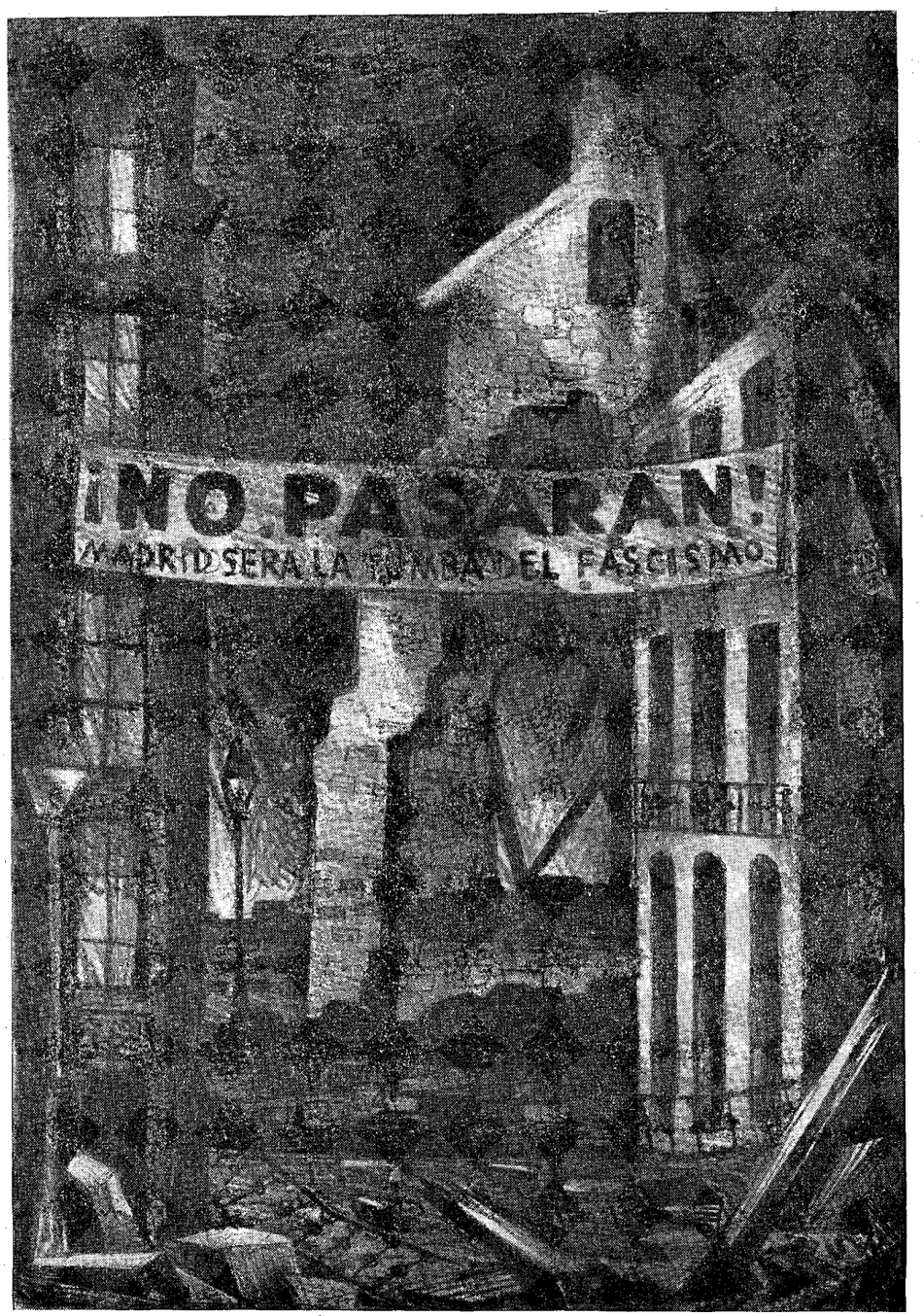
I was puzzled, as you may have been, about Spain. I read in our larger newspapers that here was a civil war, with the opposing factions neatly divided into Reds and Whites—rather as if they were chessmen. Even I could figure out that there is something not quite right when Moors are employed to defend Christianity. Since I have been here, I have heard what the people in the streets say. Not many of them call it the "war." They speak of it as the "invasion." Theirs is the better word.

There cannot be, in all the world, any place like the city of Madrid today. It has been under siege for nearly a year. You read about besieged cities in medieval days and you say, how awful things must have been, thank goodness they don't happen now. It has happened in Madrid and it goes on happening. In a city as big and as beautiful and as modern as Washington, D. C.

The dispatches say that there is not much doing on the Madrid front now—there is very little activity. It is what is called a lull. But all day long you hear the guns, the dull boom of the big guns and the irritable cackle of machine guns. And you know that gunners no longer need to shoot just for practice. When there is firing, that means there is blood and blindness and death.

And the streets are crowded, and the shops are open, and the people go about their daily living. It isn't tense and it isn't hysterical. What they have is not morale, which is something created and bolstered and directed. It is the sure, steady spirit of those who know what the fight is about and who know that they must win.

In spite of all the evacuation, there are still nearly a million people here. Some of them—you may be like that yourself—won't leave their homes and their possessions, all the things they have gathered together through the years. They are not at all dramatic about it. It is simply that anything else than the life they have made for themselves is inconceivable to them. Yesterday I saw a woman who lives in the poorest quarter of Madrid. It has been bombed twice by the fascists; her house is one of the few left standing. She has seven children. It has often been suggested to her that she and the children leave Madrid for a safer place. She dismisses such ideas easily and firmly. Every six weeks, she says, her husband has forty-eight hours' leave from the front. Naturally, he wants to come home to see her and the children. She, and each one of the



Lithograph by Henry Simon

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seven, are calm and strong and smiling. It is a typical Madrid family.

There are fifty thousand babies still here. All food is scarce, and dairy products are almost memories. But the republican government has stations all over the city where a mother may get milk and eggs and cereals for her baby, regularly, without delay. If she has any money, she may buy them at cost. If she hasn't any, she is given them. Doctors say that the little children of Madrid are better nourished than they ever were in the old days.

The bigger children play in the streets, just as happily and just as noisily as the children in America. That is, they play after school hours. For during siege and under shell fire, education in republican Spain goes on. I do not know where you can see a finer thing.

SIX YEARS AGO, when the royal romp, Alfonso, left his racing cars and his racing stables and also left, by popular request, his country, there remained twenty-eight million people. Of them, twelve million people were completely illiterate. It is said that Alfonso himself had been taught to read and write, but he had not troubled to bend his accomplishments to the reading of statistics nor the signing of appropriations for schools.

Six years ago almost half the population of this country was illiterate. The first thing that the republican government did was to recognize this hunger, the starvation of the people for education. Now there are schools even in the tiniest, poorest villages; more schools in a year than ever were in all the years of the reigning kings. And still more are being established every day. I have seen a city bombed by night, and the next morning the people rose and went on with the completion of their schools. Here in Madrid, as well as in Valencia, a workers' institute is open. It is a college, but not a college where rich young men may go to make friends with other rich young men who may be valuable to them in business with them later. It is a college where workers, forced to start as children in fields and factories, may study to be teachers or doctors or lawyers or scientists, according to their gifts. Their intensive university course takes two years. And while they are studying, the government pays their families the money they would have been earning.

In the schools for young children, there is none of the dread thing you have heard so much about—depersonalization. Each child has, at the government's expense, an education as modern and personal as a privileged American school child has at an accredited progressive school. What the Spanish republican government has done for education would be a magnificent achievement, even in days of peace, when money is easy and supplies are endless. But these people are doing it under fire. . . .

The government takes care, too, of the unfortunates of war. There are a million refugee children in Spain. A million is an easy number to say. But how can you grasp what it

John Mackey

means? Three hundred thousand of them are in the homes of families and seven hundred thousand are in children's colonies. When it can, the government wants to have all in colonies. I hope that will happen, because I have seen some of the colonies. There is no dreadful orphan-asylum quality about them. I never saw finer children—free and growing and happy. One colony was in a seaside resort, near Valencia. There were sixty children, from four to fourteen, who had been going to a school in Madrid. And the fascist planes had bombed the school.

It was amazing to see how many of these children could draw and draw well—and it was heartening to see how their talent was encouraged by the teachers. When they first came to the colony, the children drew the things that were nearest and deepest to them—they drew planes and bursting bombs and houses in flames. You could see by the dreadful perfection of detail, how well they knew their subjects. Now they are drawing flowers and apples and sail-boats and little houses with smoke coming out of the chimneys. They are well children now.

And in Valencia, a few miles away, the fascist planes come over and the bombs drop, and so there will be more children who will draw planes and flames and fragments of bodies blown in the air. That is if there are any children left.

I can't get any pleasing variety into this talk. I can't tell you amusing anecdotes of the boys in the trenches. I don't think there are any such stories. The men who fight for republican Spain, the men, who in less than a year have come from a mob wearing overalls and carrying sticks to a formidable disciplined army, are no gangling lambs, endearingly bewildered as to what is which front and who is on whose side. These are thinking men, knowing what they do, and what they must go on doing.

They are fighting for more than their lives. They are fighting for the chance to live them, for a chance for their children, for the decency and peace of the future.

Their fight is the biggest thing, certainly, that we shall see in our time, but it is not a good show. This is no gay and handsome war, with brass bands and streaming banners. These men do not need such assurances. They are not mad glamorous adventurers, they are not reckless young people plunged into a chaos. I don't think there will be any lost generation after this war.

But I, as an onlooker, am bewildered. While I was in Valencia the fascists raided it four times. If you are going to be in an air raid at all, it is better for you if it happens at night. Then it is unreal, it is almost beautiful, it is like a ballet with the scurrying figures and the great white shafts of the searchlights. But when a raid comes in the daytime, then you see the faces of the people, and it isn't unreal any longer. You see the terrible resignation on the faces of old women, and you see little children wild with terror.

In Valencia, last Sunday morning, a pretty, bright Sunday morning, five German planes came over and bombed the quarter down by the port. It is a poor quarter, the place where the men who work on the docks live, and it is, like all poor quarters, congested. After the planes had dropped their bombs, there wasn't much left of the places where so many families had been living. There was an old, old man who went up to every one he saw and asked, please, had they seen his wife, please would they tell him where his wife was. There were two little girls who saw their father killed in front of them, and were trying to get past the guards, back to the still crumbling, crashing houses to find their mother. There was a great pile of rubble, and on the top of it a broken doll and a dead kitten. It was a good job to get those. They were ruthless enemies to fascism.

I have seen the farms outside of Valencia—the lovely green quiet farms. There is soil so fertile, since the government has irrigated it, that it yields three harvests a year. So hospitable that oranges and beans and potatoes and corn and pomegranates all grow in one field. I have seen the people in the country and in the cities wanting only to go about their lives, only to secure the future of their children. They ask only as much as you have, because they are people like you—they want to get up from their tables and go to their beds, to wake to a quiet morning, and the sending of their children off to school. They don't think of accumulated money. They want to do their own work in self-respect and peace. They want the same thing that you have—they want to live in a democracy. And they will fight for it, and they will win.

But in the meantime it makes you sick to think of it. That these people who pulled themselves up from centuries of oppression and exploitation cannot go on to decent living, to peace and progress and civilization, without the murder of their children, and the blocking of their way because two men—two men—want more power. It is incredible, it is fantastic, it is absolutely beyond all belief . . . except that it is true.

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An American Poet

H. H. Lewis, Missouri dirt farmer and song maker, evaluated as an instigator to thought about what poetry can and cannot do

By William Carlos Williams

DURING the past ten years or so a man named H. H. Lewis, a persistent dirt farmer and dairyman of Cape Girardeau, Missouri, has been thinking for himself about his condition as a "free" American citizen, descendant of some of the most famous of Kentucky pioneers. And he's been thinking of others too, like himself, trying to make sense out of what confronts them today in their enjoyment of life, liberty, and in their pursuit of happiness.

Like the pioneers Lewis hasn't been content merely to think. Nor has he been willing to accept a parochial viewpoint. He has wandered for years up and down the country for a look-see. Then he returned home to work and to become vocal. His medium is, curiously enough, verse. He has published four cheaply printed, paper-covered booklets. They constitute a phenomenon worthy of widespread consideration. They are entitled, *Red Renaissance, Thinking of Russia, Salvation,* and *The Road to Utterly*. It is the beginning of a definitely new sort in American literary history. It is an important beginning. It might lead to extremely important results.

In the first place, the format of these issues is forever right. This is the way poems should be printed. It is closest to word of mouth, next to Homeric singing and a universal stage. It attacks the problem of style at the source: directly in the exigencies of publication. Publication is the weak link in the essential process of conveying undamaged writing from writer to reader today. And that comprehends style. The thought of publication is at the source that which beckons most writers to destruction. Because they must write, then, under implied restrictions making publication at least possible, a cheap pamphlet is more likely to rest upon some depth of style for its appeal, the truth personal.

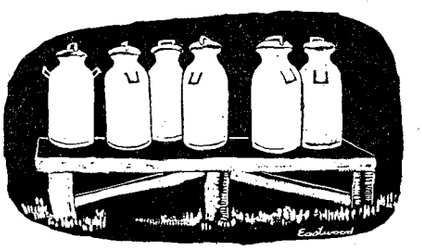
A man has to write in a certain way in order to be published in the accepted mode—his book selling for not less than a dollar. That forces his hand; it ruins his style. It transforms truths to lies. Given cheap books—if the purveying of them can be solved also—there will be in fact a renaissance. Woolworth is the logical medium, advertising being definitely out. Woolworth might make money hiring the right sort of literary sales manager. It could be done. Books like these of Lewis's at ten cents—not twenty-five cents—each, widely distributed, would free the intelligence from the tyranny of bought and sold profit printing.

Better than all conventions, all resolutions, all associations: to be published and distributed cheap and fast, voluminously. That, all but the last, I'd say is Lewis's first contribution. Later the *de luxe* editions, on parchment, of Villon, of anyone come with time, savored with time. But today distribution and availability are the pressing needs while there is yet time to know what is thought and said with a direct bearing on the day.

This has been solved in Russia where one can, apparently, read infinitely. Here we are starved, choked—writer and reader both. Our tastes dictated to us by cash, by the power held to limit what we shall know and express. This is no question of obscenity or sedition: there is legitimate news to be handed about. Lewis's cheap editions, though not cheap enough, are the right sort of gesture (before having once looked into them). Already this very shape of the books carries a mark of what should be inside.

Without saying that Lewis is important as a poet, which is a point that will have to be very carefully considered before a proper opinion can be arrived at, I will say that he is tremendously important in the United States as an instigator to thought about what poetry can and cannot do to us today. He speaks in no uncertain terms. He speaks with fervor, a revolutionary singleness and intensity of purpose, a clearly expressed content. He knows what he wants to say; he is convinced of its importance to a fanatical degree. He has been hurt, and he yells the how, why, and wherefore. In all this he resembles the American patriot of our revolutionary tradition. There is a lock, stock, and barrel identity between Lewis today, fighting to free himself from a class enslavement which torments his body with lice and cow dung, and the persecuted colonist of early American tradition. It doesn't matter that Lewis comes out openly, passionately, for Russia. When he speaks of Russia, it is precisely then that he is most American, most solidly in the tradition, not out of it, not borrowing a "foreign" solution. It is the same cry that sent Europeans to a "foreign" America and there set them madly free.

Again and again Lewis comes back to it with that brain-bursting elevation which men



Eastwood

believe in, believe in and believe that America represents.

That *is* America to the whole world, that cry:

> Russia, Russia, Russia, Russia
> Roaring with each for all. . . .

That's pure American revolutionary stuff. I should say that that is the first important thing to establish about Lewis as a poet in this second quarter of the twentieth century. There is no one that as directly expresses the mind of the United States as Lewis does now.

This isn't Auden or Spender. Nor is it Aragon's *Le Front Rouge* of an essential, if unobserved, French background. This is a Missouri farmhand, first cousin to a mule, at one dollar a day. On the other hand, all of these have one thing in common—the content of the poems involved is the essential matter; all are united in being definite movements toward political action communistic in nature. Or, to be more specific, action. The content of the poems constitutes the avowed weight of them.

THERE IS a movement in the practice of poetry (avoiding identifications of the *worth,* the content, spoken of above) largely in opposition to the character of the poetic impetus of the first quarter of the century in America (as elsewhere), which constituted a revolt in the form of the poetic matter, a clearing away of the formal impediments—for what? Implied in the work of the best writers of the first quarter of the century was a barrier in the forms themselves. It was necessary to break them down, invent new ones. And it was for an important reason that this had to be done.

Was this work a preparation for Lewis and the second quarter of the century? If so, has he been able to profit by what was offered him? Or has he missed the significance or been unable to seize the reins, going astray into charged doggerel, poetry having been pushed aside?

Taking the familiar clock-face of the statisticians as the whole of poetry, as written in the widely separate ages of its greatness in the world: how much of it will represent the best poetry of this century and how much of it is Lewis?

This brings his strength at once forward. Fervor, intensity comes to a focus by the singleness of his purpose; the clear objective, Communism, as a great desideratum to a fooled and betrayed people. This the first quarter of the century lacked.

Let it be noticed that I am speaking of poetry. It is not necessary to defame the an-

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cient practices of the art to praise Lewis or anybody. It is quite essential that one stick to pure poetry, in fact, when talking of it, whatever its incentive may be. But it is also quite possible that those who, traditionally, might be inclined to slight Lewis—from an eminence of culture—might really be doing so from what is really an eminence of bad practice.

The great segment of all poetry is belief, from which springs the rhythmic nature of the created work, and this belief, when it is at its full, asserts life, with fervor, with confidence (directly or indirectly), not death. Here Lewis excels, and this may be the determining factor of the new quarter of the century and the one after it. Lewis may be the very essence of the innovator, and so, *good*—in spite of a total lack of all other excellence: his work good *poetry*.

It may be that the new of today *must* strip themselves for action, must divest themselves of much that the first quarter of the century poet could afford to carry. They cannot be so burdened and *go* as they must. Perhaps this is the inevitable step. Not that there is an inevitable clash between the two stresses—one complements the other—but because it must be so, for reasons of poetry, to have poetry get ahead, to have it mean its full.

Looking at Lewis's books, in the poems themselves one will find what he uses of the poetic means, what he has carried over from the work immediately preceding him in his own country, because he has the fervor, and by that and whatever else he has will be measured his poetic worth and by that again the importance of his contribution to the cause he loves, the kind of work he does for it.

But whatever *his* interests may be in writing poetry, there can be no doubt about what the critic's attitude toward him should be, solely to determine the worth of his poems as poetry.

Without hesitation I say that there is here no question of high art. Lewis has read from many of the well-known English and American poets and frankly copied their forms, using them as they come readily to his hand. It might be anything from Gray to Whitman, including the books of limericks, nursery rhymes, popular songs, Poe—anything you please, even back to Shakespeare—he'll borrow the form and turn it to his own purpose. Once in a while he makes the form ring with meaning. Sometimes the attempt falls flat. But through it all runs the drive that might catch fire, actually, in a word, a phrase—bringing the mind seriously to the task of realization. At moments the charge is so great that it lifts the commonplace to lyric achievement.

> Russia, Russia, righting wrong
> Russia, Russia, Russia!
> That unified one sovereign throng,
> That hundred and sixty million strong
> Russia!
> America's loud EXAMPLE-SONG,
> Russia, Russia, Russia!

The use of the word "Russia" resembles that of Aragon's *S. S. S. R.* It goes to his head, as he says repeatedly, it maddens him with hope, with conviction, with certainty, with belief, the belief that sets him singing. His songs are songs, as good as he can make them, of triumph, realization. A poet's vision of a real future.

From the work of the first quarter of the century he has taken one positive thing, his dialect. Once in a while we come upon the inversion of Milton and hymn books. But in general he uses words with the confidence and the natural ease of a native speaking his own language as he hears it spoken in his own place and day. It adds to the impact of his seriousness.

He uses rhyme, but unaffectedly. Therefore, he uses it well. He does not let it take him for a ride for effects. He uses it in songs obviously intended for mass singing in trucks and in marching about "on business." There rhyme marks lines usefully, gives the pace and the measure.

He takes a direct interest in his day. He speaks of the political situations existing at the time he writes. He speaks directly, and so automatically does away with the putrescence of symbolism with which the first quarter of the century was cursed. He might fall into simple allegory, but it is so plain that it goes for fact simply.

He has picked up from Joyce—or out of his own head—the valuable time-saving trick of inventing words, compressing them to give a new twist to the meaning: Joyce Killer, flagrags, dailybathism, demockratism, dogmatrix, Rusevelt.

He can write, though, with the effectiveness of the expert craftsman when he does a thing like this:

> Uh needs a pair o' breeches,
> Mirandy needs a skuht.

Then he speaks of the donkey, "used to middles," which is afraid to ruin the rows of growing cotton the farmer is forcing him to plow under, saying at last: "Sumpin' sho' is rotten!" Then the piece goes on:

> I'll say,
> Phew, for Chrissake,
> The brains of the "Brain Trust,"
> that's it,
> Rrrrrotten!
>
> Pity the poor American donkey,
> Pity the poor American farmhand,
> The one nervously zigzagging,
> The other compelled to jerk him back
> to the row,
> Plowing under cotton!
> Such an "assinine"
> Torturing
> Strain on the sound sense of both!

In our need plowing under "what would be wealth in Russia." To this he comes back to again and again. Here his convictions have forced him to write well.

The four booklets show little or no progress in form that I can discern. If anything, I think the earlier ones are better, more forthright, cruder with a more patently outraged conscience. Lewis has let go, seeming to be repeating himself. Not that there can be too much repetition if his purpose—to bring about the revolution which will be the consummation of his effort—is to be achieved. He may dig up a richer nugget any day, some hot song that may force itself to everybody's lips—the *Marseillaise* of tomorrow. Maybe something he has written already will catch on and be carried to the front.

The influence of Lewis's work on other writers cannot but be good, for whatever his merits as an artist may or may not be, he has the one great strength without which there can be no art at all—the sincerity of belief in his own songs, in their value, and in their power to penetrate to the very bones of the listeners. This is a good thing that must come as a blast of healthy wind among the frailer stuff of the more cultured—no, positively *not* more cultured but less cultured—writers.

If Lewis's subject matter should distress some readers, it's about time they learned what makes their fruit and vegetables grow for them, what kind of thoughts their cultivation breeds in a man, and, finally, what the meaning of poetry is.

★ ★ ★

The Crater

The tears of things have been spoken of for a long time.
Death has many meanings, many places.
There is an island crater in Japan; a boat service
brings people to it, people who have loved, smiled—
there they stand at the pit edge waiting, thinking
(don't you believe they think?)
and a few every day drop forward into the boiling pit.
Stone Buddhas are bland; they are not Buddha. In Japan
people are not permitted on the roofs of department stores
or the roofs are adequately fenced.
Gautama Siddhartha, why is death so easy, so wanted?
And is it this death they exteriorize
on countless innocents at Nanking, Shanghai, Peiping,
directed by the generals?
If that crater could be fenced, on the fence
(and on the department store roof fences and on all such fences)
a sign, a word, should be placed:
life.
The generals, the bankers, the Mitsuis,
would never come there, never see it,
but there would be many who would understand.

MILLEN BRAND.

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READERS' FORUM

Mike Gold and Mr. Dooley—The Bay State hounds give tongue—Life in London

TO THE NEW MASSES:

It might interest some of the readers of Michael Gold's "Mr. Dooley on Spain" [issue of November 9] to know that about a third of the article actually *is* by "Mr. Dooley," the late Finley Peter Dunne, namely, "I was a little bit iv a kid thin" through "I'd've starved to death befure I'd give th' verdict." This portion of the excellent sketch is taken, only slightly paraphrased, from "On the Necessity of Modesty Among the Rich," pp. 158-164 in my copy of *Mr. Dooley: In Peace and in War* (Boston, 1914).

I'm glad to have this opportunity of making better known to those who might appreciate them the writings of this socio-political satirist of the Populist-Democrat '90's and the first decade of the present century. I was rereading Mr. Dooley on the fate of Landlord Dorsey just a few days ago, while selecting some of his reflections on the Spanish-American war to read to my class in Recent American History.

I might point out, however, that Michael Gold is probably in error in making Mr. Dooley, in referring to Hennessy's grandfather, announce: "'Twas a Catholic landlor-rd he kilt"; the clear implication of "He give freely to th' church, and was as gin'rous to the priest as to the parson," is that William Edmund Fitzgerald Dorsey was of the Protestant Ascendancy and probably a member of the Church of Ireland, the Irish equivalent of the Anglican Church.

KENNETH W. PORTER,
Department of History and Political Science, Southwestern College.

A Ballad of the Chase

TO THE NEW MASSES:

I enclose a short rhyme dedicated to the Massachusetts Commission to Investigate Subversive Activities:

SONG OF THE MYOPIA HUNT CLUB

Hurrah for the sound of the horn!
The witnesses ready and sworn.
The hunt has its merits
And one of our ferrets
The query "And where was you born?"

Our bias and prejudice shed,
We're fair and impartial instead.
We're armed with subpœna
And judges' demeanor
And the trail of the herring is red.

Our quarry has much to explain;
They're fighting for loyalist Spain.
They educate men in
The writings of Lenin;
They emphasize use of the brain.

Our prey is quite small as we know,
But we cannot allow it to grow.
We rule what is legal,
Bait traps to inveigle—
Then ask for a "yes" or a "no."

Tantivy! We've no time to lose.
Who fosters unorthodox views?
The object we press is
Their names and addresses.
"Is it him? Is it her? Is it youse?"

JOSEPH MILLER.

A Letter from London

TO THE NEW MASSES:

You don't appreciate a good thing until you haven't got it. The NEW MASSES didn't come this week and we are lost.

Living in London just a couple of miles from Parliament and the Non-Intervention Committee meeting place, one feels most strongly the pulse of international politics. The lid is going to blow off soon, very soon. People have been saying this for years, and it hasn't happened. But I still say it. The British national government will go to the limit to ensure a Franco victory—even to losing control of the Gibraltar straits (already German guns are mounted on both sides of the straits), of Egypt, of Palestine, and of her Chinese trade. The government intends to have a Franco victory because they expect such a victory to cause the overthrow of the Popular Front in France and the establishment of a right-wing government—and *then* the setting up of the British-French-German-Italian pact, with the U.S.S.R. isolated. How the London *Times* longs for this! Just read, for example, this quotation from the *Times* of October 31:

"Is not the shoal on which all the projects for a stable Europe run aground France's Russian treaty? That contemplates precisely the same issue in southeastern Europe of Teuton versus Slav that made the last war. All the subsequent complications—of Italy's intervention in Spain, of her imperial and naval ambitions in the Mediterranean, of the trouble she is making with the Arabs, of Germany's demand for colonies, perhaps even of the war in the Far East—hinge on one cause, namely, the fear that France and Russia will make war together to uphold the peace settlement in southeastern Europe and that this country will be dragged in to support the Slav against the Teuton."

So you see, the villain of the piece is the Franco-Soviet pact, which, reasons the national government, must be destroyed at all costs. And, with the exception of the *Daily Worker* and the *News Chronicle,* every newspaper in London sells this idea to the public day in and day out—never openly of course (they dare not).

In left-wing circles here, in addition to an intellectual understanding, there is a real, emotional feeling of impending crisis within the next few weeks when the expected pre-winter Franco drive will begin. What a pity that Lenin's strategy of the "main blow" is not so feasible on an international scale. For if the main blow could be administered to the British national government at this moment, the whole world picture would be changed. And, in a last analysis, only the activity of the British Communist Party, fighting for and energizing the Labor Party, can deliver that blow. They have been doing yeoman work and tomorrow's local elections [November 1] ought to reflect some of this work.

In a more than metaphoric sense are the Madrid front trenches located around the offices of the British Communist Party, for the success of democratic Spain depends to a terrible degree on the ability of the British C.P. to thwart the aims of the national government.

But they are horribly handicapped financially. By comparison the American left-wing movement is wealthy. There is so much energy devoted in America to helping Spain that I sometimes wonder why some of that force is not used for defeating Franco at a sector of paramount importance—10 Downing Street.

London, England. LEON GROPPER.

John Heliker

"Just ignore those blanks the postman left us. They are intended for idle persons who are a burden to society."

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

Halper humanizes the mail-order company—Writers' congress—Blankfort's first novel and Soviet medicine

AS a country dweller I do some business with mail-order houses, and especially with the concern that Albert Halper—for no very good reason, it seems to me—refers to as Montaigne, Warren Co.* Their eastern headquarters are not far away, and I go there once in a while, either to make retail purchases or, as more often happens, to complain about the filling of mail orders. The company makes an extraordinary number of mistakes, and, as I follow the buck that is passed from clerk to clerk and manager to manager, I usually grow nastier and nastier. So impersonal is the establishment that I am led to treat the employees as I do not treat human beings when I am conscious of them as such.

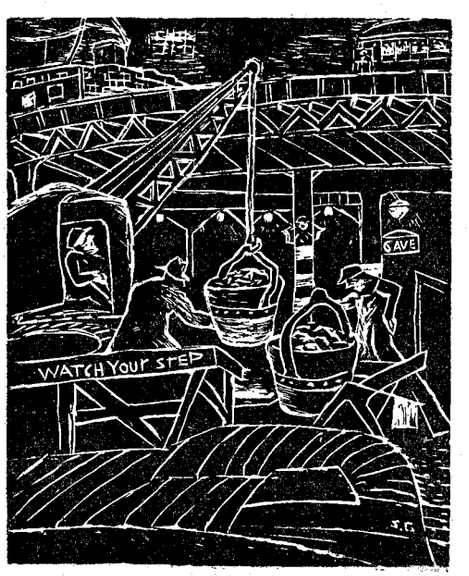
We have to accept the large-scale methods of production and distribution that are so essential and important a part of modern life, and the only way to eliminate the impersonality they encourage is through an effort of the imagination. But most of us, unaided, are incapable of this, and need the assistance that men and women of greater sensibility can give us. Certain novelists are doing this. Many writers have helped to humanize factories. Léane Zugsmith has humanized the department store. Now Albert Halper has humanized the mail-order company.

You look in a catalog, you mail an order, and sooner or later you receive, if you are lucky, the goods you want. What happens in the meantime? Suppose you order men's clothing of the Golden Rule Mail-Order House. That part of your order, copied by harried stenographers, is borne by a boy on roller skates to Department 2. The goods are selected, checked, and wrapped. Thirty minutes after the order reaches the department, bells ring out their intolerant demands, and the goods must be sent hurtling down the chute, to be assembled and shipped with the rest of your order. The chute dominates the department, and boys and girls draw on all their youthful reserves of energy to meet its demands.

Who are these boys and girls whose mistakes you damn so heartily? Well, there's Paul Sussman, for example, son of a hard-pressed tobacconist, who goes to work in Department 2 because he can't afford to study architecture. He suffers from the frustration of his hopes and from the strain of a constantly intensified speed-up. He dreams of escape and so does his family. His sister Rae, working in a garment shop, postpones her marriage to Moe Weiner and tries to save money to send Paul to college. Paul does not know of this, nor does Rae know that he is working for, and finally gets, a chance to go into an architect's office. Their plans are fruitless: Mrs. Sussman has to have an operation, and Rae, who has been relying on Golden Rule contraceptives, has to get married after all. Paul resigns himself to working for the Golden Rule Co., not knowing, even as the story ends, that the business has been captured by one of its larger competitors.

It seems foolish to say that Halper has made the employees of the mail-order companies seem like human beings. Who ever thought they were anything else? Yes, but to realize it, to realize it fully and deeply, that is a different matter. He makes you feel all the noise and tension of Department 2, and he makes you feel the human stuff that is subjected to this pressure. Not everyone is a Paul, ambitious and sensitive, but everyone has his dreams. Halper, always fecund, gives us a variety of characters: man-hunting Helen and Eve, sweetly childish Rosanna, wise-cracking Joey, Killer Howard, philosophical Mr. Cohen, tubercular Jimmy Kirby. And the bosses: neurotic Myerson, beaten Mangan, ambitious Sidell, the big shots who are not quite big enough to hold on to their business.

The pressure and what the pressure is on. Halper's obviously accurate account of the working of a mail-order house is impressive, but it would not accomplish his purpose if he were not able to set human beings before you. His characters are victims of a cruel type of exploitation, but they are remarkably resilient, full of hope, capable of joy. No one can accuse the author of a false optimism: most hopes are undeniably doomed to disappointment; the union that is organized conducts no victorious strike; the business itself has collapsed when the novel ends, and most of the characters, though they do not yet know it, are facing unemployment. Nevertheless, the reader feels in these young people the ability to rise, not forever of course, but again and again, above the strain of their exploitation. Their dreams and quarrels and romances prove they have not been crushed. They are good human stuff, the stuff out of which rebellion can and will be made.



Sid Gotcliffe

The Chute is a feat of humanization, entitling Halper to respect and admiration, but that does not mean that the reader can take pleasure in every page. Disciple of Zola and Dreiser, Halper relies on the amassing of details, relevant and irrelevant. On the first page Paul Sussman's father looks out the frost-covered window.

> The dull morning, lightening perceptibly, showed through the scratchings a piece of Chicago he was sick and tired of looking at—a small view of hardened dirty city snow, two pairs of shiny car tracks (steely), a lamp post with an old election sign pasted against its face with the command, "Vote for me!," and a large white horse-radish, minus its plumage, which had been dropped unnoticed to the ground by Mrs. Sussman, or by God knows whom.

Any college freshman could point out how the same effect could be achieved with half as many words.

The same freshman could criticize Halper's repetitions and his tricks of characterizations: Freddie's stuttering, the Dutchman's "Dorpat iss the name," Fritz Steucken's amateur detective antics, Joey's chatter about Algeria. Such tags, as Dickens long ago found out, will do much to fasten a character in the reader's mind, but they are likely to become substitutes for understanding.

And the comments! Surely no one since Dreiser has interrupted his narrative so often to speak in his own person or has spoken to such bad effect. For example: "After all, he was not made of straw; he became aroused as she held him, every part of him. In the fierce hot combat of life he began to assert himself, with all his seventeen-year-old fire. After all, he was not made of straw, not at all!" And what could have possessed Halper to send Myerson down the chute to his death? The incident, so easily predictable, so cheaply symbolic, is as wrong as anything could be.

All this ought to be said, and yet one wonders how much it should be allowed to weigh against the total achievement. Halper has borrowed from Dickens, Zola, and Dreiser certain of their least valuable devices. But fortunately he has also acquired something that cannot be borrowed from anybody: the ability to observe facts truly and to present them so cogently that their significance becomes apparent. The same thing might be done better in other ways, but it is the doing of it at all that is important.

The Chute confirms what I have recently said in the NEW MASSES about the continuing

*THE CHUTE, *by Albert Halper. Viking Press.* $2.50.

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vitality of realism. Let us by all means recognize its faults—which, it should be said, are not a necessary part of its realism. At the same time let us see and say that the book is readable, fundamentally sound, and significant, that it extends our experience by opening up for us a truly important segment of the world, that it makes a valuable contribution to the task of humanizing modern life, and that it does this, as the novel immemorially has, by giving us real people in a real environment. This is the point, so far as I am concerned, at which discussion must begin.

GRANVILLE HICKS.

Toward the Forties

THE WRITER IN A CHANGING WORLD, *Edited by Henry Hart. Equinox Coöperative Press.* $2.

THE first paper in this collection, *Toward the Forties,* was written by Joseph Freeman to introduce sixteen addresses delivered before the Second Congress of American Writers, held in New York City last June. It develops the theme of the inseparability (in Thomas Mann's words) of mind and politics, and moves through a survey of the recent past and the immediate future to the position that the best writers in America are now armed with knowledge and insight which they formerly lacked; that awaiting them is an audience, "world-wide, which will also furnish the deeds these writers will celebrate"; and that in this new creative period "it is those writers who are allied to the progressive forces now contending throughout the world who will play the important role."

The addresses follow, by a richly diversified group of speakers upon a wide range of topics, all of them the concern of the writer and most of them also the concern of the reader. The last section is an account of the congress: why it was called and by whom, what it planned to do and what it did. What it disagreed about is here too, in the form of some lively excerpts from the floor debates; and there is valuable additional material—notably the statement by the director of the Federal Writers' Project, Henry G. Alsberg, concerning the accomplishments and problems of W.P.A. writers. This reviewer suggests that after reading the introduction, you turn to the story of the congress, because it will save you intellectual and emotional jolts if you know that Ernest Hemingway, Earl Browder, Donald Ogden Stewart, and Archibald MacLeish were speaking before the crowded public meeting in Carnegie Hall which opened the congress; whereas B. A. Botkin, Kenneth Burke, Newton Arvin, Henry Hart, and others were reading papers in closed sessions of the delegates—papers planned to provoke immediate discussion from the floor. Without keeping in mind the different atmospheres, occasions, and listeners, you may find yourself, after reading Hemingway, under an all but irresistible compulsion to set sail for Spain; and after reading Burke, under an equally urgent obligation to shut yourself up in your

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study and work out, in terms of your own childhood and maturity (if any), Burke's design of inner and outer circles and random dots. You might find you were going to Spain simply because the International Brigade completed a composite father pattern in political embodiment. The STOP and GO signs change with bewildering rapidity.

Readers of the NEW MASSES do not need to be reminded of the reasons for calling the second congress or of its significance, political and literary. What they will wish to know is whether this record is worth reading and possessing. I think it is—emphatically: both as a source book that will have increasing historical value as we move on to new positions, and as a present stimulus to thought and discussion and clarification of purpose among readers as well as writers.

For one thing, several of the papers contain information not easy for various reasons to come by: such as Frances Winwar's survey of literature under Mussolini, Harry Slochower's analysis of some aspects of culture under Nazism, and Carleton Beals's account of Latin-American literature. These addresses are necessarily sketchy—Beals calls his a few snapshots of a vast panorama—but they supply names, titles, indication of trends, and are thus valuable guides to further exploration in their fields. More facts about Latin-American literature, contributed by Samuel Putnam, are to be found in the last section. Of informative value, too, is Newton Arvin's paper, reminding us of what we think we know but fail to use with any intelligence—the democratic tradition in American letters. Reactionaries will distort this tradition if we are not well-schooled in it ourselves. And Liberty Leaguers quoting Emerson can rival the devil quoting Scripture.

Another group of papers challenges us to think more accurately about fundamental assumptions. Both Kenneth Burke, on literature and science, and B. A. Botkin, on regionalism and culture, use a highly specialized vocabulary that is itself a challenge. If each paper were preceded by a simple Socratic dialogue out of which accepted definitions would emerge, it would be easier going, but perhaps not so useful for sharpening one's claws. I am still, several days after reading Mr. Botkin's paper, depressed about Mary Austin, to whom something terrible seems to have happened. But groping through terms like contra-acculturative and regional ethnocentricity, and distinctions between practical and sentimental primitivists and hard and soft primitives, one may see darkly that both Southwest Regionalists and Southern Agrarians are in a bad way. They are shut up in the inner circle of Mr. Burke's design—and that means they remain at the childhood level of experience. For regionalism—says Mr. Burke, unexpectedly coming to our rescue from Mr. Botkin—tends to extend the perspective of intimacy and immediacy one gets in childhood. That helps us to return to where we started—as Mr. Botkin says: to the artist seeking to be at home in America and ending up a long way from home—at home in the wilderness, in the cosmos, in the universe, in anything but modern industrial America. Thus regionalism offers us further examples of the frustration Mr. Hicks analyzes in the last paper, and for which he offers remedies.

His remedy is essentially in line with that call to action which sounds in the addresses that face the immediate issue of international fascist aggression. From these addresses comes the warning not to make the mistake of seeing this new situation in terms of an earlier and different situation. It is this mistake that was made by speakers from the floor in the closed sessions who attacked the idea of the people's front in literature. "The pattern of 1914," said Archibald MacLeish, "does not fit the facts of 1937. The wars of 1937 are not fought by declarations of war and mobilizations of armies. They are fought in the back streets like the assassinations of gunmen. And for an excellent reason. They *are* the assassinations of gunmen." Challenges to the people's-front idea called out the clearest and most eloquent replies in the closed sessions. Joseph Freeman said, "It is strange to hear these abstract attacks on a people's front. We are living in a period when our basic job is to preserve those conditions under which such a congress as this can be held at all."

How shall the writer face the future? Shall he go over to the reaction? Let him read about what has happened to those in Germany and Italy who chose this course. Complacently write of safe things in a shaky world—as Grazia Deledda has done in Italy? Make occasional forays from that ivory tower that looks more and more like a prison? This may relieve the writer's moral discomfort. Stay aloof and realize that while he carries out his literary labors, the forces of fascism are creating a world in which such labors cannot be carried on? Or give up time—not necessarily to Spain, but to steel strikes, to the unemployed, to the problems of racial prejudice—and so neither lose nor waste his time? Nobody, as Granville Hicks says, can tell you where to draw the line. "It is equally our duty to do good writing and by whatever other means are possible to make the world a place in which good writing can be done." And if after reading what Henry Hart has to say about the tragedy of literary waste, you feel your good writing can't be published after it is done, then read Albert Williams on "Billions of Books" in the U.S.S.R. and pluck up courage.

DOROTHY BREWSTER.

Divided Loyalties

I MET A MAN, *by Michael Blankfort. Bobbs-Merrill Co. $2.*

THIS novel is the first by a man known until now for his plays. Those blemishes from which the story suffers result from the tricks, sometimes dubious, which the author's dramatic sense now and then plays on him. The book is built up in terse, scenic units. Here and there the story depends too much on the stage method of simple suspense and quick

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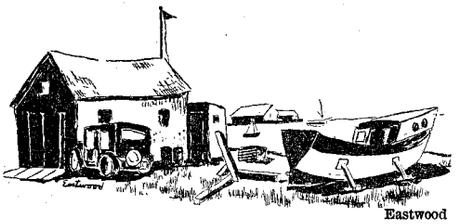
climax, of simple, crowded action, and not enough on revelation of motives and analysis of action to escape the tone of contrivance, of being manufactured, which the novel, unlike the drama, is so apt at once to reveal. On the other hand, much of the book's force comes from the counterpoint between the rapid, staccato action and the hero's gradually growing awareness of the meanings of the situation in which he finds himself.

The publishers' blurb which says that *I Met a Man* is "essentially the dramatic story of a friendship," does not do it justice. For, essentially, it is more than that (as all good novels, essentially, are more than simply "the dramatic story" of this thing or the other): it is, in Horace Gregory's sense of the word, a fable—the fable of nationalism in conflict with internationalism; of the smaller dissolving in the larger; of human selfishness gradually undermined by human sympathy, the narrow, unsatisfactory individualistic need by the larger, enriching social need. The story, or symbol, is one thing—a series of episodes, realistic, dramatic, with a beginning and an end, all within covers; but the meanings of the symbol are another thing, reverberate in the mind, expand, are dynamic, have life beyond the limits of the story, are the universal overtones.

To be sure, the point that must first of all be made is that these meanings are impressive only because the story as such is good, competently handled, hence compelling. A young American at Oxford finds himself drawn into the World War out of a purely individualistic need, as a self-imposed test of his ability to carry some one job through to its end. The job is to determine, as a spy behind the German lines, the date of the impending attack on Ypres. He becomes the friend of a sensitive young German officer, convenient to his purposes; through him, gets his information, and, unwittingly, betrays his identity to him; and finally, kills him—after their resolution that their friendship must be allowed to exist over all lesser loyalties—when he discovers that the German is releasing poison gas (the first used in the war) during the attack on Ypres.

All the time, the young American's narrow motives are being undermined by his discovery of a number of basic social truths; but these break on him finally, in their full import, when, once again in England, he learns that the allies have only been waiting for the Germans to use the gas first, so that the blame of the world would fall on them. In demonstrating to himself his ability to persist in a given task, the hero learns that the task itself is meaningless; more important, he demonstrates to himself that while the opposing forces in a war are fighting against each other, together



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Medicine on the March

SOCIALIZED MEDICINE IN THE SOVIET UNION, *by Henry E. Sigerist. W. W. Norton & Co.* $3.50.

THE ROMANCE OF RUSSIAN MEDICINE, *by Michael L. Ravitch. J. B. Liveright.* $3.

RUSSIAN MEDICINE, *by W. Horsley Gantt. Harper & Bros. Hoeber Medical Book Dept.* $2.50.

DR. HENRY E. SIGERIST, professor of the History of Medicine at Johns Hopkins University, is internationally recognized as among the most informed, cultivated, and progressive men of science of our time. When he speaks, it is with the authority possible only to those in whom great scholarship is tempered by a fine integrity of spirit and by ceaseless devotion to human values. When the full weight of this authority is placed at the disposal of the new world saluted by the late Lincoln Steffens in the striking phrase, "I have seen the future, and it works," you have something that cannot be just shoved aside, laughed at, stormed at, and damned with the faint praise of the pedant, cynic, or professional doubting Thomas.

Three years ago, in his brilliant work, *American Medicine,* Dr. Sigerist gave it as his considered opinion that the future of medicine would be determined in, and by the joint developments of, two countries: the United States and the Soviet Union. To confirm this opinion he decided upon a thorough first-hand investigation of Soviet medical achievements, as outlined in that valuable pioneer study, *Red Medicine,* by Sir Arthur Newsholme and John A. Kingsbury. Fortified by a knowledge of the Russian language and by a deep study of Russian history, literature, philosophy, and institutions, Dr. Sigerist went ahead. During many months of 1935 and 1936 he traveled extensively through the Soviet Union; observed, questioned, assembled a wealth of data from every available source, checking his material against his own rich background of knowledge, organizing it around the basic problem: Is socialized medicine possible, and will it work?

His present book—dedicated, significantly, "to the young medical workers in whose hands the future of medicine lies"—is the answer to that problem. And the answer—documented at every point, supported by a massive framework of appendices containing official decrees and statistical tabulations of the highest value—is the one emphatic word, YES!

Emphatic, but by no means doctrinaire or sentimental. Dr. Sigerist is too fine a scientist to let feelings run beyond the facts, and too

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good a Marxist to permit his intelligence to lag behind them. Disdaining an "impartiality" which strains at the gnat of truth only to swallow the camel of class prejudice, he has paid magnificent tribute to the one country in the world where both the art and science of medicine are given the fullest scope, not merely to alleviate suffering and disease but, by long-range planning of the entire social economy, to prevent them.

His book opens with a brief summary of the fundamental Marxist principles as they apply to medical and all other scientific activity. It is made clear that what distinguishes Soviet medicine from that in other countries, and particularly in America, is the deliberate and conscious adoption of these principles *from the ground up.* In other words, that a genuinely socialized medicine cannot be realized unless, and until, the *entire* productive machinery of the country is socialized, with complete abolition of private ownership and exploitation of labor. Even a cursory reading of Dr. Sigerist's historical sketch of Russian medicine—a ghastly record of futility, good intentions, chaos, and a succession of unimaginable horrors—is enough to convince the most skeptical that only a major revolution was able to save both Russia and its peoples from ultimate disaster.

How this salvation was effected by the Bolsheviks, working against a hostile world and in the midst of unparalleled internal confusion, is vividly shown by Dr. Sigerist, although a much fuller treatment of these backgrounds may be found in the admirable little book by Dr. Gantt (also an American, with a long experience of Russian medicine), and in the lively anecdotal pages of Dr. Ravitch. After a very full discussion of the principles and organizational basis of Soviet medicine, from which the reader obtains a picture of the colossal apparatus linking the most remote village and factory with the powerful research and clinical centers at Moscow, Dr. Sigerist takes us to the heart of the subject: to the actual operation of socialized medicine throughout the Soviet Union's eight million square miles.

Here, indeed, is high drama. In the two chapters on the protection of groups and of the individual is a story that, if written twenty or even ten years ago, would have seemed like a Marxist version of Francis Bacon's *Atlantis* or William Morris's *News from Nowhere.* Quietly, with a sober restraint that discourages the glib wisecrack, Dr. Sigerist drives home the accomplished facts of the Soviet regime. Of particular value to all socially conscious physicians and students of public health are his accounts of the preventive measures adopted by factories and enforced by an alert medical staff aided by 200,000 volunteer worker-delegates who see to it that sanitary conditions are right, and that all labor hazards are kept to a minimum. The reduction of industrial accidents by one-half during the First Five-Year Plan alone is of a piece with the vast health program that begins with the pregnant mother; continues through hundreds of organizations and scores of thousands of trained personnel in every phase of Soviet life; and culminates in a network of hospitals, rest homes, parks, sports activities, housing improvements—to say nothing of the Research Institutes, of which the Commissariat of Health alone controls thirty-five, and among which will shortly function the giant All-Union Institute of Experimental Medicine (the V.I.E.M.), with a technical staff of five thousand and over four thousand rooms shared between eight major departments, of thirty-four divisions and one hundred and twenty-eight sections covering virtually every field of therapy, preventive medicine, research, and practice.

It is interesting to note that, in his discussion of the care of women and children, Dr. Sigerist frankly supports the Soviet government's recent law against abortion. He does this on both medical and social grounds, claiming that not only are frequent abortions a danger to health but also that they are unnecessary in a society which guarantees the right to birth control and economic security to both children and parents.

Fully aware of the vast labors still to be performed before the Soviet Union has rounded out its program of socialized medicine, Dr. Sigerist reminds us that here in America also a great people, beginning in ignorance and without a tradition, nevertheless succeeded within fifty years in becoming medically among the most advanced of countries. And, in a challenging "Epilogue," he thus poses the issue:

> For what are we medical men fighting? We know that there will always be suffering in the world because there will always be love and hatred, frustrated ambitions, and other causes for grievance. But we believe that in a civilized society no man should be allowed to die from such elementary and primitive causes as hunger, cold, poverty, or preventable diseases. Since I have studied the Soviet Union I know that there is a future for mankind; that whatever may happen to the western world, there is a future for human civilization. And I know, in addition, that our highest medical ambitions are not utopian but may some day be realized.

Dr. Ravitch, the author of the second book in our list, studied medicine in Russia before coming to America forty years ago, and was for a time head dermatologist at the Chicago Post-Graduate Medical School. His purpose has been to write a popular narrative on the origin, history, and development of Russian medicine; his method, which is rather that of the *raconteur* than that of the scholar, is designed to give us the highlights of this story, which began in the dark shadows of medieval superstition, struggled ineffectually toward the light under a succession of czars of whom Peter the Great represented a culminating point of "reforms" destined to tragic futility. All the knowledge and skill that found their way into Russia from the West; all the ferment and energy of the eighteenth century came to a full stop before the appalling destitution and squalor of the Russian masses, whose only medicines were superstition, exile, and the knout, with such fantastic interludes

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as Catherine the Great's "Potemkin villages."

Among the many anecdotes which brighten Dr. Ravitch's pages the following, vouched for by the American surgeon, Harvey Cushing, deserves immortality. It pictures the late Ivan P. Pavlov, whom the Soviet Union delighted to honor, in the light of fascism's most caustic critics:

During the physiological meeting at Rome it was not known that Mussolini was to open the congress; but when he unexpectedly entered the Hall of Cæsar that Monday morning, there was a sudden burst of applause, at which Mussolini threw back his head and, thrusting out his chin, strode forward with the fascist salute. "Undoubtedly a conditioned reflex," Pavlov remarked to his neighbor.

A member of the American Relief Administration in 1922-23; for five years a pupil of Dr. Pavlov; a student and translator of numerous Soviet medical works, Dr. W. Horsley Gantt is admirably equipped to tell the story of Russian medicine. His book, one of the excellent Clio Medica series, though written primarily for doctors, is the best short introduction to the subject now available in English. It is particularly valuable for the recent period, which began roughly with the work of the great surgeon, N. I. Pirogov, continued through the heroic period of "Zemstvo medicine," and was to culminate—via the long, bitter road of *political* revolution—in the magnificent program of a socialist society.

In a single chapter, on "Famines and Epidemics," Dr. Gantt pictures such a reign of pure horror, agony, and disease as to make Armageddon seem a paradise; against this background, with the added incubus of civil war and intervention, and aided by People's Commissar of Health N. A. Semashko and a devoted band of physicians, the Bolsheviks fought onward. The record of this struggle even as summarized by Dr. Gantt, is among the epics of mankind: that, parallel with the day-to-day problems involving literally millions of starving and homeless people, the infant Soviets could lay the groundwork of an elaborate, long-term research development in all the sciences, is little short of a miracle.

It is good that three such well-informed authorities as Drs. Sigerist, Ravitch, and Gantt have told us something of this great story; good to know that on our troubled planet there is one enormous block of earth and sea where progress is a living, passionate reality, believed in, sought for, and carried forward by plain, ordinary human beings.

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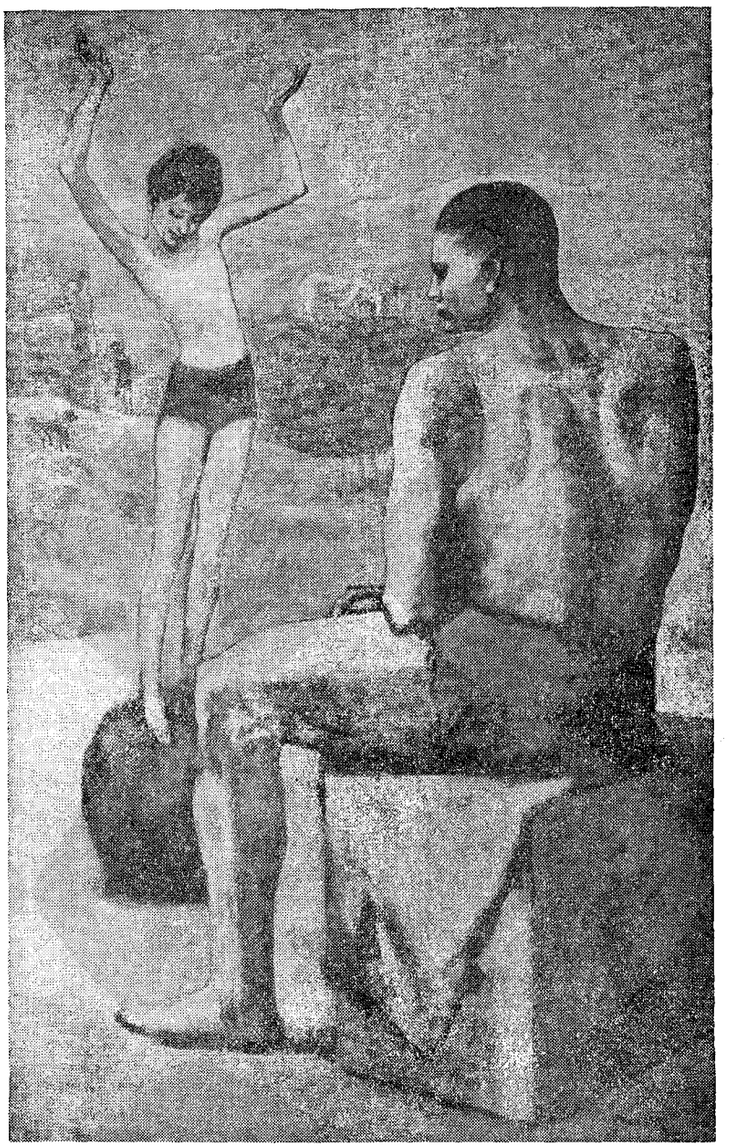

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SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

The Mercury Theatre's "Julius Cæsar" and the Kaufman-Hart "I'd Rather Be Right"—Some new films

THE good news from Broadway is that two managers who got their first chance in the W.P.A. Federal Theater have made a pact with Shakespeare and emerged with the finest production of the season in a presentation of *Julius Cæsar*. This *Julius Cæsar* is subtitled "Death of a Dictator," and its actors wear modern clothes or ambiguous uniforms of a European cut. Staged on a simple platform setting of two steps, with an apron extending into the auditorium and a ramp leading back to the bare rear wall of the theater, this production thunders the present into your ears. The stage is bare, there are no properties.

It is the version used (the first developed hereabouts which is actually an improvement on the original), the manner of the acting, the lighting, the compact, authoritative, fluid, and enormously absorbing style of the director, Orson Welles, which make the play so stirring and magnificent.

Mr. Welles is co-producer of *Julius Cæsar* with John Houseman, organized under the name of the Mercury Theatre. These are the two who went to work for the W.P.A. and presented the pictorially stunning Negro *Macbeth;* the mad farce, *Horse Eats Hat; Doctor Faustus,* and Marc Blitzstein's satiric operetta, *The Cradle Will Rock.*

If you remember school-day productions of *Julius Cæsar,* you will recall how the liberal Brutus, backed by the party of Cassius, hacked down the mighty Cæsar who was closing the doors to free speech, clamping down iron thumbs on the economy of Rome, and usurping the privileges of a god on earth. The tragedy lies in the futility of the attempted solution for the dictatorship through the madness of anarchy. The end result is simply the accession of Marc Antony to the vacated quasi-fascist throne.

Of the acting, let it be said that Orson Welles is as superior an actor as a director. Especially good is Martin Gabel as Cassius of the lean and hungry mind, and George Coulouris as Marc Antony. His is a sparingly eloquent performance but a thorough one. Others who deserve attention in this superlative company are Joseph Holland, who plays Julius Cæsar, looking like a young Mussolini; the Casca of Hiram Sherman and the Poet Cinna of Norman Lloyd.

Those comic fellows, George Kaufman and Moss Hart, have become fecund again, delivering to a properly astounded public a daring attack on that ludicrous figure, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Their brain child, *I'd Rather Be Right,* is getting more attention than two sets of Dionne quintuplets. It seems to me that the comparison is just; that this musical show is too cute for words. It certainly isn't funny.

F.D.R. may be the hero of the New Deal or the *bête noir* of reaction, but he is certainly not a figure of fun, the new pose being struck for him by the anti-administration press. They haven't been able to kill him off at the polls with arguments, so a concerted campaign to make a capering fool of him is now going on. Whether they know it or not, the authors of *I'd Rather Be Right* have subscribed to this idea, but they haven't been particularly clever about it. Believe me, it is dull stuff.

Kaufman and Hart have quite a problem. They can't be funny about the President's accomplishments so they, perforce, must make cracks. Being completely insincere, perhaps even indifferent, they have cloaked their attacks in the hypocritical guise of good fellowship, principally supplied in large, nauseating doses by that smuggest of actors, George M. Cohan, who plays the President. The issue of free speech is dragged in at the end and raped in what amounts to an epilogue as justification for what has gone before.

The setting is Central Park and the plot presents a poor young couple harassed into contemplating not marrying. Along comes President Roosevelt. They hail him, spread out the *Herald Tribune* so he can sit on Walter Lippmann, and tell him their troubles. Thereafter the whole story of the administration begins to march across the stage. Because you have read the newspapers, you know exactly what is coming. What can be funny about a joke when you know its point in advance?

Being able to count, Kaufman and Hart realize that a direct and honest attack on the President wouldn't make them a nickel because there just aren't enough Republicans. Therefore the picture of Roosevelt as a well-meaning dope and the Fourth of July speech at the end about how wonderful it is to be in a country where (boy, but we're tolerant!) even the Communists can say what they like.

Tromka

Being a musical, this has some songs, but they seem quite undistinguished. After the novelty of seeing actors who really resemble cabinet members has worn off, there is not much to the performance. The single moment of excitement comes from the dancing of Georgie Tapps. There are a few nice newcomers, Joy Hodges, for instance, and isolated instances of humor, but altogether *I'd Rather Be Right* is dreary entertainment.

The *Julius Cæsar* production turned the rest of the week into dust and ashes. Things started with a double-barreled flop, a play about the pre-George Arliss period in Lord Beaconsfield's life called *Young Mr. Disraeli* and a disastrous production of *Anthony and Cleopatra* in which Tallulah Bankhead turned the Serpent of the Nile into a southern belle, and a mess of actors tripped over their togas in an old-style production which weighed down the majesty and beauty of this play until the poetry disappeared and the tragedy became cheap and tawdry.

Miss Bankhead is a fascinating personality, and when she plays the part of an actress with a fascinating personality, she is—well, either you like her or she is spinach. We like her, but not in a good play. The version used, incidentally, is by the same Professor Strunk who improved *Romeo and Juliet* until it was good enough for the screen. He needs a little help from Orson Welles to stay him from making slashes all over the place. In this case the improvements on Shakespeare are a terrific hindrance. The role of Enobarbus, for instance, which holds the play together, largely disappeared in the shuffling of the scenes and the speeches. Other things were done by way of revisions and deletions, which hastened the relegating of this revival to the ashcan.

The leading performer in *Young Mr. Disraeli* is an English actor named Derrick DeMarney. He is an acting anomaly, one of the survivors of the arched-eyebrow and scenery-eating school. In this play by Elswyth Thane, a formally correct but dull and encyclodepic drama, Mr. DeMarney struts and frets and acts more like the villain than the hero, if you get what I mean, only he doesn't get his in the end.

The last item offered was a little piece of nonsense presenting the case for glamour in the theater, called *Places, Please.* It seemed to be about how the show must go on and how the theater calls to its own, even prying them loose from matrimony and other un-Equity pursuits. Well, it doesn't make a play which calls to me.

JACK BURROWS.

THE SCREEN

WITH no pun intended, it is obvious that *The Hurricane* (United Artists) is a *tour de force* for Mr. Samuel Goldwyn and a high class pot-boiler for

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John Ford whose work will always have to face comparison with his memorable *Informer*. It is also what is known as a "combination" film: since the authors of the original story are Charles Nordhoff and James Norman Hall, *The Hurricane* had to combine the best elements of their *Mutiny on the Bounty;* since John Ford directed, his touch would naturally be reminiscent of every one of his former films, notably *Prisoner of Shark Island;* and since Mr. Goldwyn produced, you will find things in the film from every other epic that has been made in Hollywood. In addition to all of these things *The Hurricane* is in a sense a textbook for moviemakers. There is a scene in which the Polynesian hero, Terangi (played by Jon Hall, a new Tarzan) escapes from the colonial prison in Tahiti. It is constructed in the manner of the brilliant prison-escape in *The Prisoner of Shark Island,* only with much greater skill and brilliance. This scene seems to have escaped all other commentators. It was undoubtedly lost in the hurricane that followed. But it is a beautiful example of suspense and a model for all other similar scenes.

The outstanding aspect of the film is, of course, the reels of the hurricane proper. To give you an idea of the sound and fury by a written description is impossible. It is in the best Goldwyn tradition: there has never been a storm like it before on the screen. I doubt whether a real Polynesian hurricane even approaches Mr. Goldwyn's in intensity and noise. Mr. Ford as well as his assistants, James Bassevi and R. T. Layton, are to be congratulated on their magnificent technical achievement.

Perhaps the less said about the rest of the film, about the plot, the better. The film had possibilities and for a while it even looked as though it would really amount to something. There is the usual idyllic beginning. There are no romantic natives in the manner of Robert Flaherty. They are Polynesians who have assimilated the white man's civilization by way of the Catholic Church and French imperialism. They are contemporary natives who have learned to make love in the best dynamic style of Hollywood. And so after we get Terangi and Marama (played by Dorothy Lamour who was introduced to the cinema as the Panther Woman) married off, we are introduced to the villain: the French colonial governor (Raymond Massey). Terangi, in a rage at a white drunk's bullying in Tahiti, hits him and breaks his jaw. And colonial chauvinism decided that for his "offense" Terangi is to spend six months in jail. But our Terangi is "like a bird" and refuses to stay put in jail away from his bride. For each attempted escape years are added to his sentence until he is condemned to spend sixteen years in a horrible hell-hole. And so he finally escapes.

In the meantime Dr. Kersaint (beautifully played by Thomas Mitchell) warns the governor that his stern official manner is unjust both to the natives and to his own soul which will become "dry." He informs him that he

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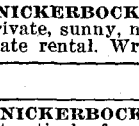
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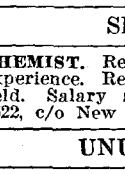
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Arthur Getz

will be deserted by his friends and subjects. Everyone has sinned: Terangi has broken a man's jaw and in the escape killed another; the governor has been unjust to Terangi and himself; the kindly Catholic priest (C. Aubrey Smith) has given assistance to the escape of the hero. And so nature takes its revenge in the form of the violent hurricane which wipes out everything. But nature also knows that you cannot wipe out the white men (especially when they are principal characters) who represent the French government (there is always foreign distribution to think of).

So after the storm subsides, you see a tree floating in the water (perfectly placed for the best composition) with all of the principal characters alive. And even the fancy preview audience laughed. And Mr. Goldwyn raised his hands to his head and said pathetically, "Why do they laugh?" Because Mr. Goldwyn, enough is too much.

IN THE good old Darryl Zanuck manner, *Lancer Spy* (20th Century-Fox) makes an attempt to give British imperialism (the film calls it patriotism) another boost. Hollywood's ace dialectician, Gregory Ratoff, who has given evidence of his ability to portray European royalty (remember the Russian waiter in *Café Metropole?*) as an actor and script writer, confirms that evidence as the director of *Lancer Spy*. Not that the film is wonderful or even very good. There is the usual kind of situation that has been seen in almost every other espionage film. But the script by Philip Dunne is slick, and Mr. Ratoff's direction is (for the most part) designed for pace. George Sanders of the British navy, who impersonates a German officer and so obtains information which was the direct cause to the enemy's downfall (it always is), gives the outstanding performance. Joseph Schildkraut as the lavender Prince Freddie is handled with a great deal of restraint, considering the part. Just as a matter of record, there are Peter Lorre and Luther Adler (of the Group Theater), who are wasted in minor roles.

Ernest Lubitsch's first film is a very long

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time, *Angel* (Paramount), is one of the most disappointing things he has ever made. There is the usual skill and directorial subtlety about a lavish lady (Marlene Dietrich), the wife of a British diplomat (Herbert Marshall) who spends most of his time away at conferences instead of paying attention to his wife. There is the inevitable triangle (Melvyn Douglas) which had its beginnings in a high-class French brothel run by a Russian countess.

If we must have bedroom farces I'd prefer them in the manner of *The Awful Truth* (Columbia Pictures), which also suffers from story trouble, but is directed with such skill by Leo McCarey that it makes for a very pleasant evening of entertainment. Mr. McCarey, who made one of the best films of the year (*Make Way for Tomorrow*), Irene Dunne (who proved herself a fine comedienne in *Theodora Goes Wild*), and Cary Grant are collectively responsible. PETER ELLIS.

★

Forthcoming Broadcasts

(Times given are Eastern Standard, but all programs listed are on coast-to-coast hookups)

"Elizabeth, the Queen." Starring Jane Cowl, Thurs., Nov. 18, 8 p.m., C.B.S.

"Georgia Transport." Columbia Workshop presents a verse play about aviation, by John Williams Andrews, author of *Prelude to Icaros,* Sun., Nov. 21, 8 p.m., C.B.S.

Town Meeting of the Air. Leading speakers discuss the question: "Has Science Advanced Human Happiness?", Thurs., Nov. 25, 9:30 p.m., N.B.C. blue.

Concert Music. The N. Y. Philharmonic under John Barbirolli, with Arthur Rubinstein, pianist, Sun., Nov. 21, 3 p.m., C.B.S.; the Chicago Opera Co. in *Manon,* Mon., Nov. 22, 11 p.m., and *Othello,* Mon., Nov. 29, 11 p.m., N.B.C. blue; N.B.C. concert hour, Thurs., Nov. 25, 11 p.m., N.B.C. red.

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China Strikes Back. A vivid picture of the Chinese people's defense against the Japanese invasion, which strikes a new high for documentaries.

Stage Door. The film version of the Kaufman-Ferber play is a rather sensitive and intelligent film of life in a theatrical boarding house.

PLAYS

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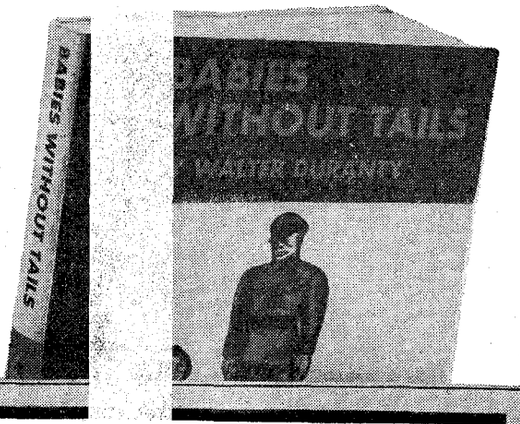

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